This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

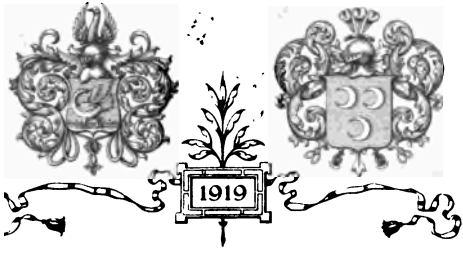
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

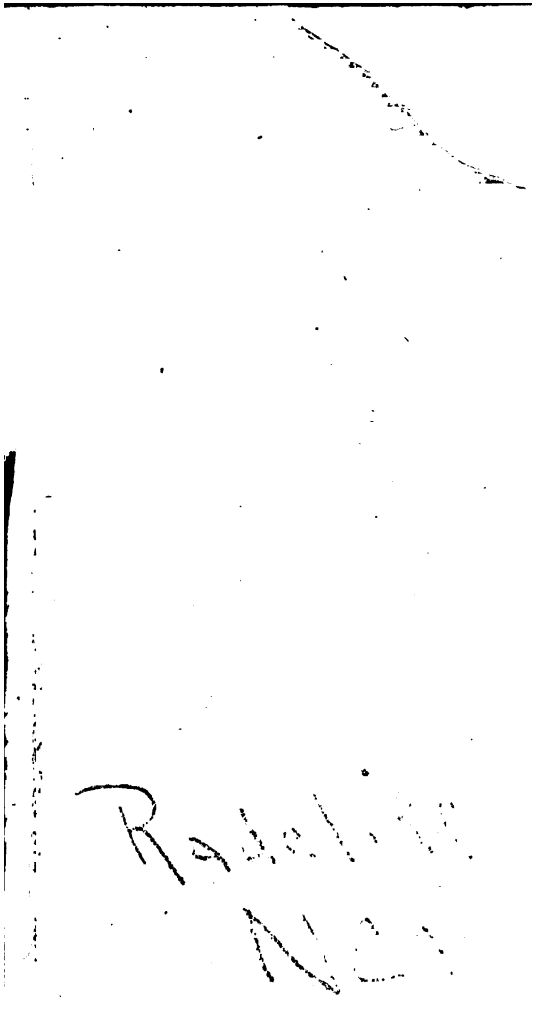
Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

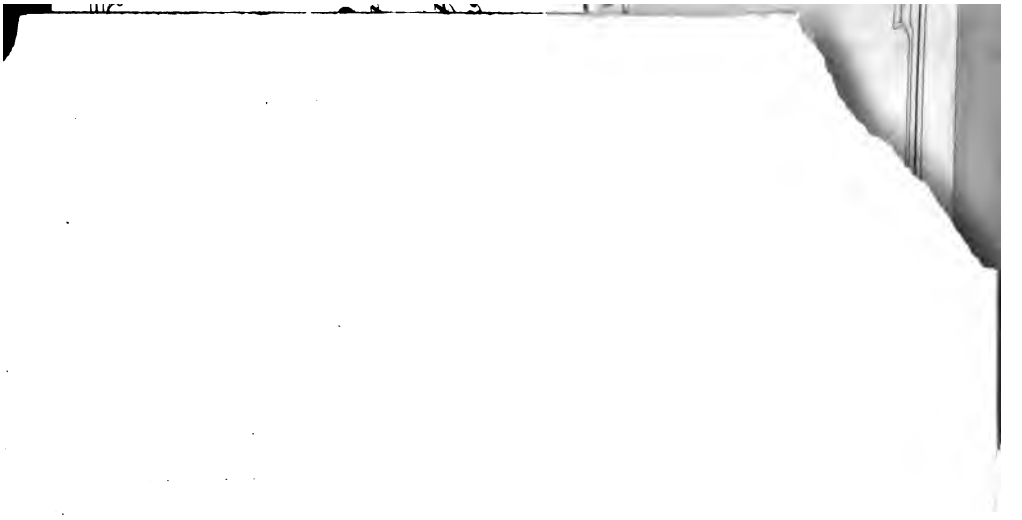
NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 07495504 2



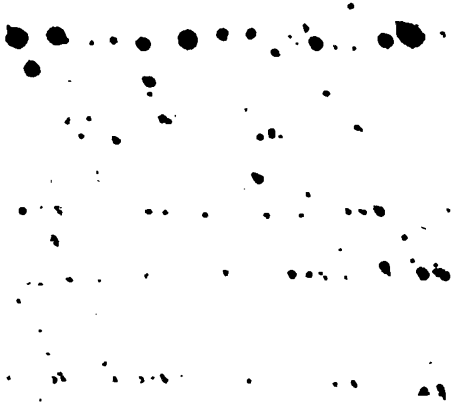
GANSEVOORT-LANSING COLLECTION

iven to the New York Public Library
Astor Lenox and Tilden Foundations
BY VICTOR HUGO PALTSITS
der the terms of the last will and testament of
CATHERINE GANSEVOORT LANSING
granddaughter of
General Peter Gansevoort, junior
and widow of the
Honorable Abraham Lansing
of Albany, New York





Adieu mon fils
ce 9 fbre 1830
Je vis en vain ces
trois jours adieu cher
adieu
je ne te verrai plus



THE

ROMANCE

OF

THE FOREST:

INTERSPERSED WITH

SOME PIECES OF POETRY.

BY MRS. RADCLIFFE,

Authoress of "A Sicilian Romance," &c., &c.

"Ere the bat hath flown
His cloistered flight; ere to black Hecate's summons.
The shard-born beetle with his drowsy hums,
Hath rung night's yawning peel, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note." *Macbeth.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY E. DUYCKINCK,
No. 68 Water-street.

1825.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
48910A
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1922 L

Gray & Bunce, Printers.

THE

ROMANCE OF THE FOREST.

CHAPTER I.

"I am a man,
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it, or be rid on't."

"WHEN once sordid interest seizes on the heart, it freezes up the source of every warm and liberal feeling; it is an enemy alike to virtue and to taste—*this* it perverts, and *that* it annihilates. The time may come, my friend, when death shall dissolve the sinews of avarice, and justice be permitted to resume her rights."

Such were the words of the Advocate Nemours to Pierre de la Motte, as the latter stept at midnight into the carriage which was to bear him far from Paris, from his creditors and the persecution of the laws. De la Motte thanked him for this last instance of his kindness; the assistance he had given him in escape; and, when the carriage drove away, uttered a sad adieu! The gloom of the hour, and the peculiar emergency of his circumstances, sunk him in silent reverie.

Whoever has read Guyot de Pitavel, the most faithful of those writers who record the proceedings in the Parliamentary Courts of Paris, during the seventeenth century, must surely remember the striking story of Pierre de la Motte, and the Marquis Phillipe de Montalt: let all such, therefore, be informed, that

the person here introduced to their notice was that individual Pierre de la Motte

As Madame de la Motte leaned from the coach window, and gave a last look to the walls of Paris—Paris, the scene of her former happiness, and the residence of many dear friends—the fortitude which had till now supported her, yielded to the force of grief. "Farewell all!" sighed she, "this last look, and we are separated for ever!" Tears followed her words, and, sinking back, she resigned herself to the stillness of sorrow. The recollection of former times pressed heavily upon her heart: a few months before and she was surrounded by friends, fortune and consequence; now she was deprived of all, a miserable exile from her native place, without home, without comfort—almost without hope. It was not the least of her afflictions, that she had been obliged to quit Paris, without bidding adieu to her only son, who was now on duty with his regiment in Germany: and such had been the precipitancy of this removal, that had she even known where he was stationed, she had no time to inform him of it, or of the alteration in his father's circumstances.

Pierre de la Motte was a gentleman descended from an ancient house of France. He was a man whose passions often overcame his reason, and for a time silenced his conscience; but, though the image of virtue, which nature had impressed upon his heart, was sometimes obscured by the passing influence of vice, it was never wholly obliterated. With strength of mind sufficient to have withstood temptation, he would have been a good man; as it was, he was always a weak, and sometimes a vicious member of society; yet his mind was active, and his imagination vivid, which, co-operating with the force of passion,

often dazzled his judgment and subdued principle. Thus he was a man, infirm in purpose and visionary in virtue; in a word, his conduct was suggested by feeling, rather than principle; and his virtue, such as it was, could not stand the pressure of occasion.

Early in life he had married Constance Valentia, a beautiful and elegant woman, attached to her family, and beloved by them. Her birth was equal, her fortune superior to his; and their nuptials had been celebrated under the auspices of an approving and flattering world. Her heart was devoted to La Motte, and, for some time, she found in him an affectionate husband; but allured by the gayeties, of Paris, he was soon devoted to its luxuries, and in a few years his fortune and affection were equally lost in dissipation. A false pride had still operated against his interest, and withheld him from honourable retreat while it was yet in his power: the habits, which he had acquired, enchained him to the scene of his former pleasure; and thus he had continued an expensive style of life till the means of prolonging it were exhausted. He at length awoke from his lethargy of security; but it was only to plunge into new error, and to attempt schemes for the reparation of his fortune, which served to sink him deeper in destruction. The consequence of a transaction, in which he thus engaged, now drove him with the small wreck of his property, into dangerous and ignominious exile.

It was his design to pass into one of the Southern Provinces, and there seek, near the borders of the kingdom, an asylum in some obscure village. His family consisted of his wife, and two faithful domestics, a man and woman, who followed the fortunes of their master.

The night was dark and tempestuous, and, at about the distance of three leagues from Paris, Peter, who now acted as postillion, having drove for some time over a wild heath where many ways crossed, stopped, and acquainted De la Motte with his perplexity. The sudden stopping of the carriage roused the latter from his reverie, and filled the whole party with the terror of pursuit; he was unable to supply the necessary direction, and the extreme darkness made it dangerous to proceed without one. During this period of distress, a light was perceived at some distance, and after much doubt and hesitation, La Motte, in the hope of obtaining assistance, alighted and advanced towards it; he proceeded slowly, from the fear of unknown pits. The light issued from the window of a small and ancient house, which stood alone on the heath, at the distance of half a mile.

Having reached the door, he stopped for some moments, listening in apprehensive anxiety—no sound was heard but that of the wind, which swept in hollow gusts over the waste. At length he ventured to knock, and having waited some time, during which he indistinctly heard several voices in conversation, some one within inquired what he wanted? La Motte answered, that he was a traveller who had lost his way, and desired to be directed to the nearest town. "That," said the person, "is seven miles off, and the road bad enough, even if you could see it: if you only want a bed, you may have it here, and had better stay."

The "pitiless pelting," of the storm, which at this time beat with increasing fury upon La Motte, inclined him to give up the attempt of proceeding farther till daylight; but desirous of seeing the person with whom he conversed, before he ventured to expose his family by

calling up the carriage, he asked to be admitted. The door was now opened by a tall figure, with a light, who invited La Motte to enter. He followed the man through a passage into a room almost unfurnished, in one corner of which a bed was spread upon the floor. The forlorn and desolate aspect of this apartment made La Motte shrink involuntarily, and he was turning to go out, when the man suddenly pushed him back, and he heard the door locked upon him: his heart failed, yet he made a desperate, though vain, effort to force the door, and called loudly for release. No answer was returned; but he distinguished the voices of men in the room above, and not doubting but their intention was to rob and murder him, his agitation, at first, overcame his reason. By the light of some almost expiring embers, he perceived a window, but the hope, which this discovery revived, was quickly lost, when he found the aperture guarded by strong iron bars. Such preparation for security surprised him, and confirmed his worst apprehensions. Alone, unarmed—beyond the chance of assistance, he saw himself in the power of people, whose trade was apparently rapine!—murder their means!—After revolving every possibility of escape, he endeavoured to await the event with fortitude; but La Motte could boast of no such virtue.

The voices had ceased, and all remained still for a quarter of an hour, when between the pauses of the wind he thought he distinguished the sobs and moaning of a female; he listened attentively, and became confirmed in his conjecture; it was too evidently the accent of distress. At this conviction, the remains of his courage forsook him, and a terrible surmise darted, with the rapidity of lightning, across his brain. It was probable that his carriage

had been discovered by the people of the house, who, with a design of plunder, had secured his servant, and brought hither Madame de la Motte. He was the more inclined to believe this, by the stillness which had, for some time, reigned in the house, previous to the sound he now heard. Or it was possible that the inhabitants were not robbers, persons to whom he had been betrayed by his friend or servant, and who were appointed to deliver him into the hands of justice. Yet he hardly dared to doubt the integrity of his friend, who had been intrusted with the secret of his flight and the plan of his route, and had procured him the carriage in which he had escaped. "Such depravity," exclaimed La Motte, "cannot surely exist in human nature; much less in the heart of Nemours!"

This ejaculation was interrupted by a noise in the passage leading to the room: it approached—the door was unlocked—and the man who had admitted La Motte into the house, entered leading, or rather forcibly dragging along, a beautiful girl, who appeared to be about eighteen. Her features were bathed in tears, and she seemed to suffer the utmost distress. The man fastened the lock and put the key in his pocket. He then advanced to La Motte, who had before observed other persons in the passage, and pointed a pistol to his breast, "You are wholly in our power," said he, "no assistance can reach you: if you wish to save your life, swear that you will convey this girl where I may never see her more; or rather consent to take her with you, for your oath I would not believe, and I can take care you shall not find me again.—Answer quickly, you have no time to lose."

He now seized the trembling hand of the girl, who shrunk aghast with terror, and hur-

ried her towards La Motte, whom surprise still kept silent. She sunk at his feet, and with supplicating eyes, that streamed with tears, implored him to have pity on her. Notwithstanding his present agitation, he found it impossible to contemplate the beauty and distress of the object before him with indifference. Her youth, her apparent innocence—the artless energy of her manner forcibly assailed his heart, and he was going to speak, when the ruffian, who mistook the silence of astonishment for that of hesitation, prevented him. "I have a horse ready to take you from hence," said he, "and I will direct you over the heath. If you return within an hour, you die: after then you are at liberty to come here when you please."

La Motte, without answering, raised the lovely girl from the floor, and was so much relieved from his own apprehensions, that he had leisure to attempt dissipating hers. "Let us be gone," said the ruffian, "and have no more of this nonsense; you may think yourself well off it's no worse. I'll go and get the horse ready."

The last words roused La Motte, and perplexed him with new fears; he dreaded to discover his carriage, lest its appearance might tempt the banditti to plunder; and to depart on horseback with this man might produce a consequence yet more to be dreaded. Madame La Motte, wearied with apprehension, would, probably, send for her husband to the house, when all the former danger would be incurred, with the additional evil of being separated from his family, and the chance of being detected by the emissaries of justice in endeavouring to recover them. As these reflections passed over his mind in tumultuous rapidity, a noise was again heard in the passage,

an uproar and scuffle ensued, and in the same moment he could distinguish the voice of his servant, who had been sent by Madame La Motte in search of him. Being now determined to disclose what could not long be concealed, he exclaimed aloud that a horse was unnecessary, that he had a carriage at some distance, which would convey them from the heath, the man, who was seized, being his servant.

The ruffian, speaking through the door, bid him be patient awhile, and he should hear more from him. La Motte now turned his eyes upon his unfortunate companion, who, pale and exhausted, leaned for support against the wall. Her features, which were delicately beautiful, had gained from distress an expression of captivating sweetness: she had

> "An eye
> As when the blue sky trembles thro'a cloud
> Of purest white."

A habit of gray camlet, with short slashed sleeves, showed, but did not adorn, her figure: it was thrown open at the bosom, upon which part of her hair had fallen in disorder, while the light veil hastily thrown on, had in her confusion been suffered to fall back. Every moment of farther observation heightened the surprise of La Motte, and interested him more warmly in her favour. Such elegance and apparent refinement, contrasted with the desolation of the house, and the savage manners of its inhabitants, seemed to him like a romance of imagination, rather than an occurrence of real life. He endeavoured to comfort her, and his sense of compassion was too sincere to be misunderstood. Her terror gradually subsided into gratitude and grief. "Ah, Sir," said she, "Heaven has sent you to my relief,

and will surely reward you for your protection: I have no friend in the world, if I do not find one in you."

La Motte assured her of his kindness, when he was interrupted by the entrance of the ruffian. He desired to be conducted to his family. "All in good time," replied the latter; "I have taken care of one of them, and will of you, please St. Peter; so be comforted." These *comfortable* words renewed the terror of La Motte, who now earnestly begged to know if his family were safe. "O! as for that matter, they are safe enough, and you will be with them presently; but don't stand *parlying* here all night. Do you choose to go or stay? You know the conditions." They now bound the eyes of La Motte and of the young lady, whom terror had hitherto kept silent, and then placing them on two horses, a man mounted behind each, and they immediately galloped off. They had proceeded in this way near half an hour, when La Motte entreated to know whither he was going? "You will know that by and by," said the ruffian, "so be at peace." Finding interrogatories useless, La Motte resumed silence till the horses stopped. His conductor then hallooed, and being answered by voices at some distance, in a few moments the sound of carriage wheels was heard, and presently after, the words of a man directing Peter which way to drive. As the carriage approached, La Motte called, and to his inexpressible joy, was answered by his wife.

"You are now beyond the borders of the heath, and may go which way you will," said the ruffian; "if you return within an hour, you will be welcomed by a brace of bullets." This was a very unnecessary caution to La Motte, whom they now released. The young stranger sighed deeply, as she entered the carriage:

and the ruffian, having bestowed upon Peter some directions and more threats, waited to see him drive off. They did not wait long.

La Motte immediately gave a short relation of what had passed at the house, including an account of the manner in which the young stranger had been introduced to him. During this narrative, her deep convulsive sighs frequently drew the attention of Madame La Motte, whose compassion became gradually interested in her behalf, and who now endeavoured to tranquillize her spirits. The unhappy girl answered her kindness in artless and simple expressions, and then relapsed into tears and silence. Madame forbore for the present to ask any questions that might lead to a discovery of her connexions, or seem to require an explanation of the late adventure, which now furnishing her with a new subject of reflection, the sense of her own misfortunes pressed less heavily upon her mind. The distress of La Motte was even for a while suspended; he ruminated on the late scene, and it appeared like a vision, or one of those improbable fictions that sometimes are exhibited in a romance: he could reduce it to no principles of probability, or render it comprehensible by any endeavour to analyze it. The present charge, and the chance of future trouble brought upon him by this adventure, occasioned some dissatisfaction; but the beauty and seeming innocence of Adeline, united with the pleadings of humanity in her favour, and he determined to protect her.

The tumult of emotions which had passed in the bosom of Adeline, began now to subside; terror was softened into anxiety, and despair into grief. The sympathy so evident in the manners of her companions, particularly in those of Madame La Motte, soothed her

heart and encouraged her to hope for better days.

Dismally and silently the night passed on; for the minds of the travellers were too much occupied by their several sufferings to admit of conversation. The dawn so anxiously watched for, at length appeared, and introduced the strangers more fully to each other. Adeline derived comfort from the looks of Madame La Motte, who gazed frequently and attentively at her, and thought she had seldom seen a countenance so interesting, or a form so striking. The languor of sorrow threw a melancholy grace upon her features, that appealed immediately to the heart; and there was a penetrating sweetness in her blue eyes, which indicated an intelligent and amiable mind.

La Motte now looked anxiously from the coach window, that he might judge of their situation, and observe whether he was followed. The obscurity of the dawn confined his views, but no person appeared. The sun at length tinted the eastern clouds and the tops of the highest hills, and soon after burst in full splendour on the scene. The terror of La Motte began to subside, and the griefs of Adeline to soften. They entered upon a lane confined by high banks and overarched by trees, on whose branches appeared the first green buds of spring glittering with dews. The fresh breeze of the morning animated the spirits of Adeline, whose mind was delicately sensible to the beauties of nature As she viewed the flowery luxuriance of the turf, and the tender green of the trees, or caught, between the opening banks, a glimpse of the varied landscape, rich with wood, and fading into the blue and distant mountains, her heart expanded in momentary joy. With Adeline the charms of external nature were heightened by those of novel-

ty: she had seldom seen the grandeur of an extensive prospect, or the magnificence of a wide horizon—and not often the picturesque beauties of more confined scenery. Her mind had not lost by long oppression that elastic energy, which resists calamity; else, however susceptible might have been her original taste, the beauties of nature would no longer have charmed her thus easily even to temporary repose.

The road at length wound down the side of a hill, and La Motte, again looking anxiously from the window, saw before him an open champaign country, through which the road, wholly unsheltered from observation, extended almost in a direct line. The danger of these circumstances alarmed him, for his flight might without difficulty be traced for many leagues from the hills he was now descending. Of the first peasant that passed, he inquired for a road among the hills, but heard of none. La Motte now sunk into his former terrors. Madame, notwithstanding her own apprehensions, endeavoured to reassure him, but finding her efforts ineffectual, she also retired to the contemplation of her misfortunes. Often, as they went on, did La Motte look back upon the country they had passed, and often did imagination suggest to him the sounds of distant pursuits.

The travellers stopped to breakfast in a village, where the road was at length obscured by woods, and La Motte's spirits again revived. Adeline appeared more tranquil than she had yet been, and La Motte now asked for an explanation of the scene he had witnessed on the preceding night. The inquiry renewed all her distress, and with tears she entreated for the present to be spared on the subject. La Motte pressed it no farther, but he observed that for the greater part of the day she seemed to re-

member it in melancholy and dejection. They now travelled among the hills, and were, therefore, in less danger of observation; but La Motte avoided the great towns, and stopped in obscure ones no longer than to refresh the horses. About two hours after noon, the road wound into a deep valley, watered by a rivulet, and overhung with wood. La Motte called to Peter, and ordered him to drive to a thickly embowered spot, that appeared on the left. Here he alighted with his family, and Peter, having spread the provisions on the turf, they seated themselves and partook of the repast, which, in other circumstances, would have been thought delicious. Adeline endeavoured to smile, but the languor of grief was now heightened by indisposition. The violent agitation of mind, and the fatigue of body, which she had suffered for the last twenty-four hours, had overpowered her strength, and, when La Motte led her back to the carriage, her whole frame trembled with illness. But she uttered no complaint, and, having long observed the dejection of her companions, she made a feeble effort to enliven them.

They continued to travel throughout the day without any accident or interruption, and, about three hours after sunset, arrived at Monville, a small town, where La Motte determined to pass the night. Repose was indeed necessary to the whole party, whose pale and haggard looks, as they alighted from the carriage, were but too obvious to pass unobserved by the people of the inn. As soon as the beds could be prepared Adeline withdrew to her chamber, accompanied by Madame La Motte, whose concern for the fair stranger made her exert every effort to soothe and console her. Adeline wept in silence, and taking the hand of madame, pressed it to her bosom. These

were not merely tears of grief—they were mingled with those which flow from the grateful heart, when unexpectedly it meets with sympathy. Madame La Motte understood them. After some momentary silence she renewed her assurances of kindness, and entreated Adeline to confide in her friendship; but she carefully avoided any mention of the subject, which had before so much affected her. Adeline at length found words to express her sense of this goodness, which she did in a manner so natural and sincere, that madame, finding herself much affected, took leave of her for the night.

In the morning La Motte rose at an early hour, impatient to be gone. Every thing was prepared for his departure, and the breakfast had been waiting some time, but Adeline did not appear. Madame La Motte went to her chamber, and found her sunk in a disturbed slumber. Her breathing was short and irregular—she frequently started, or sighed, and sometimes she muttered an incoherent sentence. While madame gazed with concern upon her languid countenance, she awoke, and looking up, gave her hand to madame La Motte, who found it burning with fever. She had passed a restless night, and as she now attempted to rise, her head, which beat with intense pain, grew giddy, her strength failed, and she sunk back.

Madame was much alarmed, being at once convinced that it was impossible she could travel, and that a delay might prove fatal to her husband. She went to inform him of the truth, and his distress may be more easily imagined than described. He saw all the inconvenience and danger of delay, yet he could not so far divest himself of humanity, as to abandon Adeline to the care, or rather to the neglect of

strangers. He sent immediately for a physician, who pronounced her to be in a high fever, and said, a removal in her present state must be fatal. La Motte now determined to wait the event, and endeavoured to calm the transports of terror which at times assailed him. In the meanwhile he took such precautions as his situation admitted of, passing the greater part of the day out of the village, in a spot from whence he had a view of the road for some distance; yet to be exposed to destruction by the illness of a girl, whom he did not know, and who had actually been forced upon him, was a misfortune, to which La Motte had not philosophy enough to submit with composure.

Adeline's fever continued to increase during the whole day, and at night, when the physician took his leave, he told La Motte, the event would very soon be decided. La Motte received this intelligence with real concern. The beauty and innocence of Adeline had overcome the disadvantageous circumstances under which she had been introduced to him, and he now gave less consideration to the inconvenience she might hereafter occasion him, than to the hope of her recovery.

Madame La Motte watched over her with tender anxiety, and observed with admiration her patient sweetness and mild resignation. Adeline amply repaid her, though she thought she could not. "Young as I am," she would say, "and deserted by those upon whom I have a claim for protection, I can remember no connexion to make me regret life so much as that I hoped to form with you. If I live, my conduct will best express my sense of your goodness;—words are but feeble testimonies."

The sweetness of her manners so much at-

tracted Madame La Motte, that she watched the crisis of her disorder, with a solicitude which precluded every other interest. Adeline passed a very disturbed night, and when the physician appeared in the morning, he gave orders that she should be indulged with whatever she liked, and answered the inquiries of La Motte with a frankness that left him nothing to hope.

In the meantime, his patient, after drinking profusely of some mild liquids, fell asleep, in which she continued for several hours, and so profound was her repose, that her breath alone gave sign of existence. She awoke free from fever, and with no other disorder than weakness, which in a few days, she overcame so well, as to be able to set out with La Motte for B——, a village out of the great road, which he thought it prudent to quit. There they passed the following night, and early the next morning commenced their journey upon a wild and woody tract of country. They stopped about noon at a solitary village, where they took refreshments, and obtained directions for passing the vast forest of Fontanville, upon the borders of which they now were La Motte wished at first to take a guide, but he apprehended more evil from the discovery he might make of his route, than he hoped for benefit from assistance in the wilds of this uncultivated tract.

La Motte now designed to pass on to Lyons, where he could either seek concealment in its neighbourhood, or embark on the Rhone for Geneva, should the emergency of his circumstances hereafter require him to leave France. It was about twelve o'clock at noon, and he was desirous to hasten forward, that he might pass the forest of Fontanville, and reach the town on its opposite borders, before night-fall. Having deposited a fresh stock of provisions in

the carriage, and received such directions as were necessary concerning the roads, they again set forward, and in a short time entered upon the forest. It was now the latter end of April, and the weather was remarkably temperate and fine. The balmy freshness of the air, which breathed the first pure essence of vegetation; and the gentle warmth of the sun, whose beams vivified every hue of nature, and opened every floweret of spring, revived Adeline, and inspired her with life and health. As she inhaled the breeze, her strength seemed to return, and as her eyes wandered through the romantic glades that opened into the forest, her heart was gladdened with complacent delight but when from these objects she turned her regard upon monsieur and madame La Motte, to whose tender attentions she owed her life, and in whose looks she now read esteem and kindness, her bosom glowed with sweet affections, and she experienced a force of gratitude which might be called sublime.

For the remainder of the day they continued to travel without seeing a hut, or meeting a human being. It was now near sunset, and the prospect being closed on all sides by the forest, La Motte began to have apprehensions that his servant had mistaken the way. The road, if a road it could be called, which afforded only a slight track upon the grass, was sometimes overrun with luxuriant vegetation, and sometimes obscured by the deep shades, and Peter at length stopped uncertain of the way. La Motte, who dreaded being benighted in a scene so wild and solitary as this forest, and whose apprehensions of banditti were very sanguine, ordered him to proceed at any rate, and, if he found no track, to endeavour to gain a more open part of the forest. With these orders, Peter again set forwards, but having

proceeded some way, and his views being still confined by woody glades and forest walks, he began to despair of extricating himself, and stopped for further orders. The sun was now set, but as La Motte looked anxiously from the window, he observed upon the vivid glow of the western horizon, some dark towers rising from among the trees at a little distance, and ordered Peter to drive towards them. "If they belong to a monastery," said he, "we may probably gain admittance for the night."

The carriage drove along under the shade of "melancholy boughs," through which the evening twilight, which yet coloured the air, diffused a solemnity that vibrated in thrilling sensations upon the hearts of the travellers. Expectation kept them silent. The present scene recalled to Adeline a remembrance of the late terrific circumstances, and her mind responded but too easily to the apprehension of new misfortunes. La Motte alighted at the foot of a green knoll, where the trees again opening to light, permitted a nearer, though imperfect view of the edifice.

CHAPTER. II.

"How these antique towers and vacant courts
Chill the suspended soul! Till expectation
Wears the face of fear: and fear, half ready
To become devotion, mutters a kind
Of mental orison, it knows not wherefore.
What a kind of being is circumstance!"

Horace Walpole.

He approached, and perceived the Gothic remains of an abbey: it stood on a kind of rude lawn, overshadowed by high and spreading trees, which seemed coeval with the building, and diffused a romantic gloom around.

The greater part of the pile appeared to be sinking into ruins, and that which had withstood the ravages of time, showed the remaining features of the fabric more awful in decay. The lofty battlements, thickly enwreathed with ivy, were half demolished, and become the residence of birds of prey. Huge fragments of the eastern tower, which was almost demolished, lay scattered amid the high grass, that waved slowly to the breeze. "The thistle shook its lonely head; the moss whistled to the wind." A Gothic gate, richly ornamented with fret-work, which opened into the main body of the edifice, but which was now obstructed with brushwood, remained entire. Above the vast and magnificent portal of this gate arose a window of the same order, whose pointed arches still exhibited fragments of stained glass, once the pride of monkish devotion. La Motte, thinking it possible it might yet shelter some human being, advanced to the gate, and lifted a massy knocker. The hollow sound rung through the emptiness of the place. After waiting a few minutes, he forced back the gate, which was heavy with iron work, and creaked harshly on its hinges.

He entered what appeared to have been the chapel of the abbey, where the hymn of devotion had once been raised, and the tear of penitence had once been shed; sounds which could now only be recalled by imagination—tears of penitence, which had been long since fixed in fate. La Motte paused a moment, for he felt a sensation of sublimity rising into terror —a suspension of mingled astonishment and awe! He surveyed the vastness of the place, and as he contemplated its ruins, fancy bore him back to past ages. "And these walls," said he, "where once superstition lurked, and austerity anticipated an earthly purgatory,

now tremble over the mortal remains of the beings who reared them!"

The deepening gloom now reminded La Motte that he had no time to lose, but curiosity prompted him to explore farther, and he obeyed the impulse. As he walked over the broken pavement, the sound of his steps ran in echoes through the place, and seemed like the mysterious accents of the dead, reproving the sacrilegious mortal who thus dared to disturb their precincts.

From this chapel he passed into the nave of the great church, of which one window more perfect than the rest, opened upon a long vista of the forest, through which was seen the rich colouring of evening, melting by imperceptible gradations into the solemn gray of upper-air. Dark hills, whose outline appeared distinct upon the vivid glow of the horizon, closed the perspective. Several of the pillars, which had once supported the roof, remained the proud effigies of sinking greatness, and seemed to nod at every murmur of the blast over the fragments of those that had fallen a little before them. La Motte sighed. The comparison between himself and the gradation of decay, which these columns exhibited, was but too obvious and affecting. "A few years," said he, "and I shall become like the mortals on whose relics I now gaze, and, like them too, I may be the subject of meditation to a succeeding generation, which shall totter but a little while over the object they contemplate, ere they also sink into the dust."

Retiring from this scene, he walked through the cloisters, till a door, which communicated with the lofty part of the building attracted his curiosity. He opened this, and perceived, across the foot of the staircase, another door—but now, partly checked by fear, and partly by

the recollection of the surprise his family might feel in his absence, he returned with hasty steps to his carriage, having wasted some of the precious moments of twilight, and gained no information.

Some slight answer to madame La Motte's inquiries, and a general direction to Peter to drive carefully on, and look for a road, was all that his anxiety would permit him to utter. The night shade fell thick round, which deepened by the gloom of the forest, soon rendered it dangerous to proceed. Peter stopped, but La Motte, persisting in his first determination, ordered him to go on. Peter ventured to remonstrate, madame La Motte entreated, but La Motte reproved—commanded, and at length repented; for the hind wheel rising upon the stump of an old tree, which the darkness had prevented Peter from observing, the carriage was in an instant overturned.

The party, as may be supposed, were much terrified, but no one was materially hurt, and having disengaged themselves from their perilous situation, La Motte and Peter endeavoured to raise the carriage. The extent of this misfortune was now discovered, for they perceived that the wheel was broke. Their distress was reasonably great, for not only was the coach disabled from proceeding, but it could not even afford a shelter from the cold dews of the night, it being impossible to preserve it in an upright situation. After a few moments silence, La Motte proposed that they should return to the ruins which they had just quitted, which lay at a very short distance, and pass the night in the most habitable part of them; that, when morning dawned, Peter should take one of the coach horses, and endeavour to find a road and a town, from whence assistance should be procured for repairing the

carriage. This proposal was opposed by madame La Motte, who shuddered at the idea of passing so many hours of darkness in a place so forlorn as the monastery. Terrors which she neither endeavoured to examine, or combat, overcame her, and she told La Motte she had rather remain exposed to the unwholesome dews of night, than to encounter the desolation of the ruins. La Motte had at first felt an equal reluctance to return to this spot, but having subdued his own feelings, he resolved not to yield to those of his wife.

The horses being now disengaged from the carriage, the party moved towards the edifice. As they approached it, Peter, who followed them, struck a light, and they entered the ruins by the flame of sticks, which he had collected. The partial gleams thrown across the fabric seemed to make its desolation more solemn, while the obscurity of the greater part of the pile heightened its sublimity, and led fancy on to scenes of horror. Adeline, who had hitherto remained in silence, now uttered an exclamation of mingled admiration and fear. A kind of pleasing dread thrilled her bosom, and filled all her soul. Tears started into her eyes:—she wished, yet feared to go on;—she hung upon the arm of La Motte, and looked at him with a sort of hesitating interrogation.

He opened the door of the great hall, and they entered: its extent was lost in gloom. "Let us stay here," said madame de La Motte, "I will go no farther." La Motte pointed to the broken roof, and was proceeding, when he was interrupted by an uncommon noise, which passed along the hall. They were all silent—it was the silence of terror. Madame La Motte spoke first. "Let us quit this spot," said she, "any evil is preferable to the feeling

which now oppresses me. Let us retire instantly." The stillness had for some time remained undisturbed, and La Motte, ashamed of the fear he had involuntarily betrayed, now thought it necessary to affect a boldness which he did not feel. He therefore opposed ridicule to the terror of Madame, and insisted upon proceeding. Thus compelled to acquiesce, she traversed the hall with trembling steps. They came to a narrow passage, and Peter's sticks being nearly exhausted, they awaited here, while he went in search of more.

The almost expiring light flashed faintly upon the walls of the passage, showing the recess more horrible. Across the hall, the greater part of which was concealed in shadow, the feeble ray spread a tremulous gleam, exhibiting the chasm in the roof, while many nameless objects were seen imperfectly through the dusk. Adeline, with a smile, inquired of La Motte, if he believed in spirits. The question was ill-timed, for the present scene impressed its terrors upon La Motte, and in spite of endeavour, he felt a superstitious dread stealing upon him. He was now, perhaps, standing over the ashes of the dead. If spirits were ever permitted to revisit the earth, this seemed the hour and the place most suitable for their appearance. La Motte remaining silent, Adeline said, "Were I inclined to superstition"—She was interrupted by a return of the noise, which had been lately heard. It sounded down the passage, at whose entrance they stood, and sunk gradually away. Every heart palpitated, and they remained listening in silence. A new subject of apprehension seized La Motte:—the noise might proceed from banditti, and he hesitated whether it would be safe to proceed. Peter now came with the light: Madame refused to enter the passage—La Motte was not

much inclined to it, but Peter, in whom curiosity was more prevalent than fear, readily offered his services. La Motte, after some hesitation, suffered him to go, while he awaited at the entrance the result of the inquiry. The extent of the passage soon concealed Peter from view, and the echoes of his footsteps were lost in a sound, which rushed along the avenue, and became fainter and fainter, till it sunk into silence. La Motte called aloud to Peter, but no answer was returned; at length, they heard the sound of a distant footstep, and Peter soon after appeared, breathless, and pale with fear.

When he came within hearing of La Motte, he called out, "An please your honour, I've done for them, I believe, but I've had a hard bout. I thought I was fighting with the devil." —What are you speaking of? said La Motte.

"They were nothing but owls and rooks after all," continued Peter; "but the light brought them all about my ears, and they made such a confounded clapping with their wings, that I thought at first I had been beset with a legion of devils. But I have drove them all out, master, and you have nothing to fear now."

The latter part of the sentence, intimating a suspicion of his courage, La Motte could have dispensed with, and to retrieve in some degree his reputation, he made a point of proceeding through the passage. They now moved on, with alacrity, for as Peter said, they had "nothing to fear."

The passage led into a large area, on one side of which, over a range of cloisters, appeared the west tower, and a lofty part of the edifice; the other side was open to the woods. La Motte led the way to a door of the tower, which he now perceived was the same he had formerly entered; but he found some difficulty

in advancing, for the area was overgrown with brambles and nettles, and the light, which Peter carried, afforded only an uncertain gleam. When he unclosed the door, the dismal aspect of the place revived the apprehensions of Madame La Motte, and extorted from Adeline an inquiry whither they were going. Peter held up the light to show the narrow staircase that wound round the tower; but La Motte observing the second door, drew back the rusty bolts, and entered a spacious apartment, which, from its style and condition, was evidently of a much later date than the other part of the structure; though desolate and forlorn, it was very little impaired by time; the walls were damp, but not decayed; and the glass was yet firm in the windows.

They passed on to a suit of apartments resembling the first they had seen, and expressed their surprise at the incongruous appearance of this part of the edifice with the mouldering walls they had left behind. These apartments conducted them to a winding passage, that received light and air through narrow cavities, placed high in the wall, and was at length closed by a door barred with iron, which being with some difficulty opened, they entered a vaulted room. La Motte surveyed it with a scrutinizing eye, and endeavoured to conjecture for what purpose it had been guarded by a door of such strength; but he saw little within to assist his curiosity. The room appeared to have been built in modern times upon a Gothic plan. Adeline approached a large window that formed a kind of recess raised by one step over the level of the floor; she observed to La Motte that the whole floor was inlaid with Mosaic work; which drew from him a remark, that the style of this apartment was not strictly Gothic. He passed on to a door, which ap-

peared on the opposite side of the apartment. and unlocking it, found himself in the great hall, by which he had entered the fabric.

He now perceived, what the gloom had before concealed, a spiral staircase. which led to a gallery above; and which, from its present condition, seemed to have been built with the more modern part of the fabric, though this also affected the Gothic mode of architecture: La Motte had little doubt that these stairs led to apartments, corresponding with those he had passed below, and hesitated whether to explore them: but the entreaties of Madame, who was much fatigued, prevailed with him to defer all further examination. After some deliberation, in which of the rooms they should pass the night, they determined to return to that which opened from the tower.

A fire was kindled on a hearth, which it is probable had not for many years before afforded the warmth of hospitality; and Peter having spread the provision he had brought from the coach, La Motte and his family, encircled round the fire, partook of a repast, which hunger and fatigue made delicious. Apprehension gradually gave way to confidence, for they now found themselves in something like a human habitation, and they had leisure to laugh at their late terrors; but, as the blast shook the doors, Adeline often started, and threw a fearful glance around. They continued to laugh and talk cheerfully for a time; yet their merriment was transient, if not affected; for a sense of their peculiar and distressed circumstances pressed upon their recollection, and sunk each individual into languor and pensive silence. Adeline felt the forlornness of her condition with energy; she reflected upon the past with astonishment, and anticipated the future with fear. She found herself wholly

dependent upon strangers, with no other claim than what distress demands from the common sympathy of kindred beings; sighs swelled her heart, and the frequent tear started to her eye; but she checked it, ere it betrayed on her cheek the sorrow, which she thought it would be ungrateful to reveal.

La Motte, at length, broke this meditative silence, by directing the fire to be renewed for the night, and the door to be secured: this seemed a necessary precaution, even in this solitude, and was effected by means of large stones piled against it, for other fastening there was none. It had frequently occurred to La Motte, that this apparently forsaken edifice might be a place of refuge to banditti. Here was solitude to conceal them; and a wild and extensive forest to assist their schemes of rapine, and to perplex, with its labyrinths, those who might be bold enough to attempt pursuit. These apprehensions, however, he hid within his own bosom, saving his companions from a share of the uneasiness they occasioned. Peter was ordered to watch at the door, and having given the fire a rousing stir, our desolate party drew round it, and sought in sleep a short oblivion of care.

The night passed on without disturbance. Adeline slept, but uneasy dreams fleeted before her fancy, and she awoke at an early hour: the recollection of her sorrows arose upon her mind, and yielding to their pressure, her tears flowed silently and fast. That she might indulge them without restraint, she went to a window that looked upon an open part of the forest; all was gloom and silence; she stood for some time viewing the shadowy scene.

The first tender tints of morning now appeared on the verge of the horizon, stealing upon the darkness;—so pure, so fine, so ethe-

real! it seemed as if Heaven was opening to the view. The dark mists were seen to roll off to the west, as the tints of light grew stronger, deepening the obscurity of that part of the hemisphere, and involving the features of the country below; meanwhile, in the east, the hues became more vivid, darting a trembling lustre far around, till a ruddy glow, which fired all that part of the Heavens, announced the rising sun. At first, a small line of inconceivable splendour emerged on the horizon, which quickly expanding, the sun appeared in all his glory, unveiling the whole face of nature, vivifying every colour of the landscape, and sprinkling the dewy earth with glittering light. The low and gentle responses of birds, awakened by the morning ray, now broke the silence of the hour; their soft warbling rising by degrees till they swelled the chorus of universal gladness. Adeline's heart swelled too with gratitude and adoration.

The scene before her soothed her mind, and exalted her thoughts to the great Author of Nature; she uttered an involuntary prayer: "Father of good, who made this glorious scene! I resign myself to thy hands; thou wilt support me under my present sorrows, and protect me from future evil."

Thus confiding in the benevolence of God, she wiped the tears from her eyes, while the sweet union of conscience and reflection rewarded her trust; and her mind, losing the feelings which had lately oppressed it, became tranquil and composed.

La Motte awoke soon after, and Peter prepared to set out on his expedition. As he mounted his horse, "An please you, master," said he, "I think we had as good look no farther for a habitation till better times turn up; for nobody will think of looking for us here;

and when one sees the place by daylight, its none so bad, but what a little patching up would make it comfortable enough." La Motte made no reply to the thought of Peter's words. During the intervals of the night, when anxiety had kept him waking, the same idea had occurred to him; concealment was his only security, and this place afforded it. The desolation of the spot was repulsive to his wishes; but he had only a choice of evil; a forest with liberty was not a bad home for one, who had too much reason to expect a prison. As he walked through the apartments, and examined their condition more attentively, he perceived they might easily be made habitable; and now surveying them under the cheerfulness of morning, his design strengthened; and he mused upon the means of accomplishing it, which nothing seemed so much to obstruct as the apparent difficulty of procuring food.

He communicated his thoughts to Madame La Motte, who felt repugnance to the scheme. La Motte, however, seldom consulted his wife, till he had determined how to act; and he had already resolved to be guided in this affair by the report of Peter. If he could discover a town in the neighbourhood of the forest, where provisions and other necessaries could be procured, he would seek no farther for a place of rest.

In the meantime, he spent the anxious interval of Peter's absence in examining the ruin, and walking over the environs: they were sweetly romantic, and the luxuriant woods, with which they abounded, seemed to sequester this spot from the rest of the world. Frequently a natural vista would yield a view of the country, terminated by hills, which retiring in distance, faded into the blue horizon. A stream, various and musical in its course,

wound at the foot of the lawn, on which stood the abbey; here it silently glided beneath the shades, feeding the flowers that bl[illegible]ed on its banks, and diffusing dewy freshn[illegible] of verdure around; here it spread its broad expanse to the sky, reflecting the sylvan scene, and the wild deer that tasted its waves. La Motte observed every where a profusion of game; the pheasants scarcely flew from his approach, and the deer gazed mildly at him as he passed. They were strangers to man!

On his return to the abbey, La Motte ascended the stairs that led to the tower. About half way up a door appeared in the wall; it yielded, without resistance, to his hand; but a sudden noise within, accompanied by a cloud of dust, made him step back and close the door. After waiting a few minutes, he again opened it, and perceived a large room of the more modern building. The remains of tapestry hung in tatters upon the walls, which were become the residence of birds of prey, whose sudden flight on the opening of the door had brought down a quantity of dust, and occasioned the noise. The windows were shattered, and almost without glass; but he was surprised to observe some remains of furniture; chairs, whose fashion and condition bore the date of their antiquity: a broken table, and an iron grate almost consumed by rust.

On the opposite side of the room was a door, which led to another apartment, proportioned like the first, but hung with arras somewhat less tattered. In one corner stood a small bedstead, and a few shattered chairs were placed round the walls. La Motte gazed with a mixture of wonder and curiosity. "'Tis strange," said he, "that these rooms, and these alone, should bear the marks of inhabitation; perhaps, some wretched wanderer, like myself,

may have here sought refuge from a persecuting world; and here, perhaps, laid down the load of existence: perhaps, too, I have followed his footsteps, but to mingle my dust with his!" He turned suddenly, and was about to quit the room, when he perceived a small door near the bed; it opened into a closet, which was lighted by one small window, and was in the same condition as the apartments he had passed, except that it was destitute even of the remains of furniture. As he walked over the floor, he thought he felt one part of it shake beneath his steps, and examining, found a trap door. Curiosity prompted him to explore farther, and with some difficulty he opened it. It disclosed a staircase which terminated in darkness. La Motte descended a few steps, but was unwilling to trust the abyss; and after wondering for what purpose it was so secretly constructed, he closed the trap, and quitted this suit of apartments.

The stairs in the tower above were so much decayed, that he did not attempt to ascend them; he returned to the hall, and by the spiral staircase, which he had observed the evening before, reached the gallery, and found another suit of apartments entirely unfurnished, very much like those below.

He renewed with madame La Motte his former conversation respecting the abbey, and she exerted all her endeavours to dissuade him from his purpose, acknowledging the solitary security of the spot, but pleading that other places might be found equally well adapted for concealment, and more for comfort. This La Motte doubted: besides, the forest abounded with game, which would, at once, afford him amusement and food, a circumstance, considering his small stock of money, by no means to be overlooked; and he had suffered his mind

to dwell so much upon the scheme, that it was become a favourite one. Adeline listened in silent anxiety to the discourse, and waited the issue of Peter's report.

The morning passed, but Peter did not return. Our solitary party took their dinner of the provision they had fortunately brought with them, and afterwards walked forth into the woods. Adeline, who never suffered any good to pass unnoticed, because it came attended with evil, forgot for awhile the desolation of the abbey in the beauty of the adjacent scenery. The pleasantness of the shades soothed her heart, and the varied features of the landscape amused her fancy; she almost thought she could be contented to live here. Already she began to feel an interest in the concerns of her companions, and for Madame La Motte she felt more; it was the warm emotion of gratitude and affection.

The afternoon wore away, and they returned to the abbey. Peter was still absent, and his absence now began to excite surprise and apprehension. The approach of darkness also threw a gloom upon the hopes of the wanderers; another night must be passed under the same forlorn circumstances as the preceding one; and, what was still worse, with a very scanty stock of provisions. The fortitude of Madame La Motte now entirely forsook her, and she wept bitterly. Adeline's heart was as mournful as madame's, but she rallied her drooping spirits, and gave the first instance of her kindness by endeavouring to revive those of her friend.

La Motte was restless, and uneasy, and, leaving the abbey, he walked alone the way which Peter had taken. He had not gone far, when he perceived him between the trees, leading his horse. "What news, Peter?"

hallooed La Motte. Peter came on, panting for breath, and said not a word, till La Motte repeated the question in a tone of somewhat more authority. "Ah, bless you, master!" said he, when he had taken breath to answer, "I am glad to see you; I thought I should never have got back again: I've met with a world of misfortunes."

"Well, you may relate them hereafter; let me hear whether you have discovered"—

"Discovered!" interrupted Peter, "Yes, I am discovered with a vengeance! If your honour will look at my arms, you'll see how I am discovered."

"Discoloured, I suppose you mean," said La Motte. "But how came you in this condition?"

"Why, I'll tell you how it was, Sir; your honour knows I learned a smack of boxing of that Englishman that used to come with his master to our house."

"Well, well—tell me where you have been."

"I scarcely know myself, master; I've been where I got a sound drubbing, but then it was in your business, and so I don't mind. But if ever I meet with that rascal again!"—

"You seem to like your first drubbing so well, that you want another, and unless you speak more to the purpose, you shall soon have one."

Peter was now frightened into method, and endeavoured to proceed: "When I left the old abbey," said he, "I followed the way you directed, and, turning to the right of that grove of trees yonder, I looked this way and that, to see if I could see a house, or a cottage, or even a man, but not a *soul* of them was to be seen, and so I jogged on, near the value of a league I warrant, and then I came to a track; oh! oh, says I, we have you now; this will do

—paths can't be made without feet. However, I was out in my reckoning, for the devil a bit of a *soul* could I see, and after following the track this way and that way, for the third of a league, I lost it, and had to find out another."

"Is it impossible for you to speak to the point?" said La Motte, "omit these foolish particulars, and tell me whether you have succeeded."

"Well, then master, to be short, for that's the nearest way after all, I wandered a long while at random, I did not know where, all through a forest like this, and I took special care to note how the trees stood, that I might find my way back. At last I came to another path, and was sure I should find something now, though I had found nothing before, for I could not be mistaken twice; so, peeping between the trees, I spied a cottage, and I gave my horse a lash, that sounded through the forest, and I was at the door in a minute. They told me there was a town about half a league off, and bade me follow the track, and it would bring me there; so it did; and my horse I believe smelt the corn in the manger by the rate he went at. I inquired for a wheelwright, and was told there was but one in the place, and he could not be found. I waited and waited, for I knew it was in vain to think of returning without doing my business. The man at last came home from the country, and I told him how long I had waited; for, says I, I knew it was in vain to return without my business."

"Do be less tedious," said La Motte, "if it is in thy nature."

"It is in my nature," answered Peter, "and if it was more in my nature, your honour should have it all. Would you think it, Sir, the fellow had the impudence to ask a louis d'or for mending the coach wheel! I believe in

my conscience he saw I was in a hurry and could not do without him. A louis d'or! says I, my master shall give no such price, he sh'an't be imposed upon by no such rascal as you. Whereupon, the fellow looked glum, and gave me a douse o'the chops: with this, I up with my fist and gave him another, and should have beat him presently, if another man had not come in, and then I was obliged to give up."

"And so you are returned as wise as you went?"

"Why master, I hope I have too much spirit to submit to a rascal, or let you submit to one either; besides, I have bought some nails to try if I can't mend the wheel myself, I had always a hand at carpentry."

"Well, I commend your zeal in my cause, but on this occasion it was rather ill-timed. And what have you got in that basket?"

"Why, master, I bethought me that we could not get away from this place till the carriage was ready to draw us, and, in the meantime, says I, nobody can live without victuals, so I'll e'en lay out the little money I have and take a basket with me."

"That's the only wise thing you have done yet, and, this indeed, redeems your blunders."

"Why now, master, it does my heart good to hear you speak: I knew I was doing for the best all the while: but I've had a hard job to find my way back; and here's another piece of ill luck, for the horse has got a thorn in his foot"

La Motte made inquiries concerning the town, and found it was capable of supplying him with provision, and what little furniture was necessary to render the abbey habitable. This intelligence almost settled his plans, and he ordered Peter to return on the following morning, and make inquiries concerning the

abbey. If the answers were favourable to his wishes, he commissioned him to buy a cart, and load it with some furniture and some materials necessary for repairing the modern apartments. Peter stared: "What, does your honour mean to live here?"

"Why, suppose I do?"

"Why then your honour has made a wise determination, according to my hint; for your honour knows I said"—

"Well, Peter, it is not necessary to repeat what you said; perhaps I had determined on the subject before."

"Egad, master, you're in the right, and I'm glad of it, for, I believe, we shall not quickly be disturbed here, except by the rooks and owls. Yes, yes—I warrant I'll make it a place fit for a king; and as for the town one may get any thing, I'm sure of that; though they think no more about this place than they do about India or England, or any of those places."

They now reached the abbey, where Peter was received with great joy; but the hopes of his mistress and Adeline were repressed, when they learned that he returned, without having executed his commission, and heard his account of the town. La Motte's orders to Peter were heard with almost equal concern by madame and Adeline; but the latter concealed her uneasiness, and used all her efforts to overcome that of her friend. The sweetness of her behaviour, and the air of satisfaction she assumed, sensibly affected madame, and discovered to her a source of comfort, which she had hitherto overlooked. The affectionate attentions of her young friend promised to console her for want of other society, and her conversation to enliven the hours which might otherwise be passed in painful regret.

The observations and general behaviour of Adeline already bespoke a good understanding, and an amiable heart, but she had yet more—she had genius. She was now in her nineteenth year; her figure of the middling size, and turned to the most exquisite proportion; her hair was dark auburn, her eyes blue, and whether they sparkled with intelligence, or melted with tenderness, they were equally attractive: her form had the airy lightness of a nymph, and, when she smiled, her countenance might have been drawn for the younger sister of Hebe: the captivations of her beauty were heightened by the grace and simplicity of her manners, and confirmed by the intrinsic value of a heart

> "That might be shrin'd in crystal,
> And have all its movements scann'd."

Annette now kindled the fire for the night: Peter's basket was opened, and supper prepared. Madame La Motte was still pensive and silent. "There is scarcely any condition so bad," said Adeline, "but we may one time or other wish we had not quitted it. Honest Peter, when he was bewildered in the forest, or had two enemies to encounter instead of one, confesses he wished himself at the abbey. And I am certain, there is no situation so destitute, but comfort may be extracted from it. The blaze of this fire shines yet more cheerfully from the contrasted dreariness of the place; and this plentiful repast is made yet more delicious, from the temporary want we have suffered. Let us enjoy the good and forget the evil."

"You speak, my dear," replied Madame La Motte, "like one, whose spirits have not been often depressed by misfortune, (Adeline sighed) and whose hopes are, therefore, vigorous."

"Long suffering," said La Motte, "has subdued in our minds that elastic energy, which repels the pressure of evil, and dances to the bound of joy. But I speak in rhapsody, though only from the remembrance of such a time. I once, like you, Adeline, could extract comfort from most situations."

"And may now, my dear Sir," said Adeline. "Still believe it possible, and you will find it is so."

"The illusion is gone—I can no longer deceive myself."

"Pardon me, Sir, if I say, it is now only you deceive yourself, by suffering the cloud of sorrow to tinge every object you look upon."

"It may be so," said La Motte, "but let us leave the subject."

After supper the doors were secured, as before, for the night, and the wanderers resigned themselves to repose.

On the following morning, Peter again set out for the little town of Auboine, and the hours of his absence were again spent by Madame La Motte and Adeline in much anxiety and some hope; for the intelligence he might bring concerning the abbey, might yet release them from the plans of La Motte. Towards the close of the day, he was descried coming slowly on; and the cart, which accompanied him, too certainly confirmed their fears. He brought materials for repairing the place, and some furniture.

Of the abbey he gave an account, of which the following is the substance:—It belonged, together with a large part of the adjacent forest, to a nobleman, who now resided with his family on a remote estate. He inherited it, in right of his wife, from his father-in-law, who had caused the more modern apartments to be erected, and had resided in them some part of

every year, for the purpose of shooting and hunting. It was reported, that some person was, soon after it came to the present possessor, brought secretly to the abbey, and confined in these apartments; who, or what he was, had never been conjectured, and what became of him nobody knew. The report died gradually away, and many persons entirely disbelieved the whole of it. But however this affair might be, certain it was, the present owner had visited the abbey only two summers, since his succeeding to it; and the furniture, after some time, was removed.

This circumstance at first excited surprise, and various reports arose in consequence, but it was difficult to know what ought to be believed. Among the rest it was said, that strange appearances had been observed at the abbey, and uncommon noises heard; and though this report had been ridiculed by sensible persons as the idle superstition of ignorance, it had fastened so strongly upon the minds of the common people, that for the last seventeen years none of the peasantry had ventured to approach the spot. The abbey was now, therefore, abandoned to decay.

La Motte ruminated upon this account. At first, it called up unpleasant ideas, but they were soon dismissed, and considerations more interesting to his welfare took place; he congratulated himself that he had now found a spot, where he was not likely to be either discovered or disturbed; yet it could not escape him that there was a strange coincidence between one part of Peter's narrative, and the condition of the chambers that opened from the tower above stairs. The remains of furniture, of which the other apartments were void—the solitary bed—the number and connexion of the rooms, were circumstances that

united to confirm his opinion. This, however, he concealed in his own breast, for he already perceived that Peter's account had not assisted in reconciling his family to the necessity of dwelling at the abbey.

But they had only to submit in silence, and whatever disagreeable apprehension might intrude upon them, they now appeared willing to suppress the expression of it. Peter, indeed, was exempt from any evil of this kind; he knew no fear, and his mind was now wholly occupied with his approaching business. Madame La Motte, with a placid kind of despair, endeavoured to reconcile herself to that, which no effort of understanding could teach her to avoid, and which an indulgence in lamentation could only make more intolerable. Indeed, though a sense of the immediate inconveniencies to be endured at the abbey, had made her oppose the scheme of living there, she did not really know how their situation could be improved by removal; yet her thoughts often wandered towards Paris, and reflected the retrospect of past times, with the images of weeping friends left, perhaps, for ever. The affectionate endearments of her only son, whom, from the danger of his situation, and the obscurity of hers, she might reasonably fear never to see again, arose upon her memory, and overcame her fortitude. "Why, why was I reserved for this hour?" would she say, "and what will be my years to come?"

Adeline had no retrospect of past delight to give emphasis to present calamity—no weeping friends—no dear regretted objects to point the edge of sorrow, and throw a sickly hue upon her future prospects: she knew not yet the pangs of disappointed hope, or the acuter sting of self accusation; she had no misery, but

what patience could assuage, or fortitude overcome.

At the dawn of the following day Peter arose to his labour; he proceeded with alacrity, and, in a few days, two of the lower apartments were so much altered for the better, that La Motte began to exult, and his family to perceive that their situation would not be so miserable as they had imagined. The furniture Peter had already bought was disposed in these rooms, one of which was the vaulted apartment. Madame La Motte furnished this as a sitting room, preferring it for its large Gothic window, that descended almost to the floor, admitting a prospect of the lawn, and the picturesque scenery of the surrounding woods.

Peter having returned to Auboine for a farther supply, all the lower apartments were in a few weeks not only habitable, but comfortable. These, however, being insufficient for the accommodation of the family, a room above stairs was prepared for Adeline; it was the chamber that opened immediately from the tower, and she preferred it to those beyond, because it was less distant from the family, and the windows, fronting an avenue of the forest, afforded a more extensive prospect. The tapestry, that was decayed, and hung loosely from the walls, was now nailed up, and made to look less desolate; and, though the room had still a solemn aspect, from its spaciousness and the narrowness of the windows, it was not uncomfortable.

The first night that Adeline retired hither, she slept little: the solitary air of the place affected her spirits; the more so, perhaps, because she had, with friendly consideration, endeavoured to support them in the presence of madame La Motte. She remembered the narrative of Peter, several circumstances of

which had impressed her imagination in spite of her reason, and she found it difficult wholly to subdue apprehension. At one time, terror so strongly seized her mind, that she had even opened the door with an intention of calling Madame La Motte; but, listening for a moment on the stairs of the tower, every thing seemed still; at length she heard the voice of La Motte speaking cheerfully, and the absurdity of her fears struck her forcibly; she blushed that she had for a moment submitted to them, and returned to her chamber wondering at herself.

CHAPTER III.

"Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court?
Here feel we but the penalty of Adam,
The seasons' difference, as the icy fang
And churlish chiding of the winter's wind."
Shakspeare.

La Motte arranged his little plan of living. His mornings were usually spent in shooting, or fishing, and the dinner thus provided by his industry, he relished with a keener appetite than had ever attended him at the luxurious tables of Paris. The afternoons he passed with his family: some imes he would select a book from the few he had brought with him, and endeavoured to fix his attention to the words his lips repeated:— but his mind suffered little abstraction from its own cares, and the sentiment he pronounced left no trace behind it. Sometimes he conversed, but oftener sat in gloomy silence, musing upon the past, or anticipating the future.

At these moments, Adeline, with a sweet-

ness almost irresistible, endeavoured to enliven his spirits, and to withdraw him from himself. Seldom she succeeded, but when she did, the grateful looks of Madame La Motte, and the benevolent feelings of her own bosom, realized the cheerfulness she had at first only assumed. Adeline's mind had the happy art, or perhaps, it were more just to say the happy nature, of accommodating itself to her situation. Her present condition, though forlorn, was not devoid of comfort, and this comfort was confirmed by her virtue. So much she won upon the affections of her protectors, that Madame La Motte loved her as her child, and La Motte himself, though a man little susceptible of tenderness, could not be insensible to her solicitudes. Whenever he relaxed from the sullenness of misery, it was at the influence of Adeline.

Peter regularly brought a weekly supply of provisions from Auboine, and, on those occasions, always quitted the town by a route contrary to that leading to the abbey. Several weeks having passed without molestation, La Motte dismissed all apprehension of pursuit, and at length became tolerably reconciled to the complexion of his circumstances. As habit and effort strengthened the fortitude of Madame La Motte, the features of misfortune appeared to soften. The forest, which at first seemed to her a frightful solitude, had lost its terrific aspect; and that edifice, whose half demolished walls and gloomy desolation had struck her mind with the force of melancholy and dismay, was now beheld as a domestic asylum, and a safe refuge from the storms of power.

She was a sensible and highly accomplished woman, and it became her chief delight to form the rising graces of Adeline, who had, as has

been already shown, a sweetness of disposition, which made her quick to repay instruction with improvement, and indulgence with love. Never was Adeline so pleased as when she anticipated her wishes, and never so diligent as when she was employed in her business. The little affairs of the household she overlooked and managed with such admirable exactness, that Madame La Motte had neither anxiety nor care concerning them. And Adeline formed for herself in this barren situation, many amusements, that occasionally banished the remembrance of her misfortunes. La Motte's books were her chief consolation. With one of these she would frequently ramble into the forest, where the river winding through a glade, diffused coolness, and with its murmuring accents, invited repose: there she would seat herself, and, resigned to the illusions of the page, pass many hours in oblivion of sorrow.

Here too when her mind was tranquillized by the surrounding scenery, she wooed the gentle muse, and indulged in ideal happiness. The delight of these moments she commemorated in the following address

TO THE VISION OF FANCY.

Dear, wild illusions of creative mind!
Whose varying hues arrise to Fancy's art,
And by her magic force are swift combined
In forms that please, and scenes that touch the heart;
Oh! whether at her voice ye soft assume
The pensive grace of sorrow drooping low;
Or rise sublime on terror's lofty plume,
And shake the soul with wildly thrilling wo;
Or, sweetly bright, your gayer tints ye spread,
Bid scenes of pleasure steal upon my view,
Love wave his purple pinions o'er my head,
And wake the tender thought to passion true;
O! still—ye shadowy forms! attend my lonely hours.
Still chase my real cares with your illusive powers!

Madame La Motte had frequently expressed curiosity concerning the events of Adeline's

life, and by what circumstances she had been thrown into a situation so perilous and mysterious as that in which La Motte had found her. Adeline had given a brief account of the manner in which she had been brought thither, but had always with tears intreated to be spared for that time from a particular relation of her history.

Her spirits were not then equal to retrospection, but now that they were soothed by quiet, and strengthened by confidence, she one day gave Madame La Motte the following narration.

I AM the only child, said Adeline, of Louis de St. Pierre, a chevalier of reputable family, but of small fortune, who for many years resided at Paris. Of my mother I have a faint remembrance; I lost her when I was only seven years old, and this was my first misfortune. At her death, my father gave up house keeping, boarded me in a convent and quitted Paris. Thus was I, at this early period of my life, abandoned to strangers. My father came sometimes to Paris; he then visited me, and I well remember the grief I used to feel when he bade me farewell. On these occasions, which rung my heart with grief, he appeared unmoved; so that I often thought he had little tenderness for me. But he was my father; and the only person to whom I could look up for protection and love.

In this convent I continued till I was twelve years old. A thousand times I had entreated my father to take me home, but at first motives of prudence and afterwards of avarice prevented him. I was now removed from this convent, and placed in another, where I learned my father intended I should take the veil. I will not attempt to express my surprise and

grief on this occasion. Too long I had been immured in the walls of a cloister, and too much had I seen of the sullen misery of its votaries, not to feel horror and disgust at the prospect of being added to their number.

The Lady Abbess was a woman of rigid decorum and severe devotion; exact in the observance of every detail of form, and never forgave an offence against ceremony. It was her method, when she wanted to make converts to her order, to denounce and terrify rather than to persuade and allure. Hers were the arts of cunning practised upon fear, not those of sophistication upon reason. She employed numberless stratagems to gain me to her purpose, and they all wore the complexion of her character. But in the life to which she would have devoted me, I saw too many forms of real terror, to be overcome by the influence of her ideal host, and was resolute in rejecting the veil. Here I passed several years of miserable resistance against cruelty and superstition. My father I seldom saw; when I did, I entreated him to alter my destination, but he objected that his fortune was insufficient to support me in the world, and at length denounced vengeance upon my head if I persisted in disobedience.

You, my dear madam, can form little idea of the wretchedness of my situation, condemned to perpetual imprisonment, and imprisonment of the most dreadful kind, or to the vengeance of a father, from whom I had no appeal. My resolution relaxed—for some time I paused upon the choice of evils—but at length the horrors of the monastic life rose so fully to my view, that fortitude gave way before them. Excluded from the cheerful intercourse of society—from the pleasant view of nature—almost from the light of day—con-

demned to silence—rigid formality—abstinence and penance—condemned to forego the delights of a world, which imagination painted in the gayest and most alluring colours, and whose hues were, perhaps, not the less captivating because they they were only ideal—such was the state to which I was destined. Again my resolution was invigorated; my father's cruelty subdued tenderness, and roused indignation. "Since he can forget," said I, "the affection of a parent, and condemn his child without remorse to wretchedness and despair—the bond of filial and parental duty no longer subsists between us—he has himself dissolved it, and I will yet struggle for liberty and life."

Finding me unmoved by menace, the lady Abbess had now recourse to more subtile measures: she condescended to smile, and even to flatter; but hers was the distorted smile of cunning, not the gracious emblem of kindness; it provoked disgust, instead of inspiring affection. She painted the character of a vestal in the most beautiful tints of art—its holy innocence—its mild dignity—its sublime devotion. I sighed as she spoke. This she regarded as a favourable symptom, and proceeded on he picture with more animation. She described the serenity of a monastic life—its security from the seductive charms, restless passions, and sorrowful vicissitudes of the world—the rapturous delights of religion, and the sweet reciprocal affection of the sisterhood.

So highly she finished the piece, that the lurking lines of cunning would, to an inexperienced eye, have escaped detection. Mine was too sorrowfully informed. Too often had I witnessed the secret tear and bursting sigh of vain regret, the sullen pinings of discontent, and the mute anguish of despair. My silence and my manner assured her of my incredulity.

and it was with difficulty that she preserved a decent composure.

My father, as may be imagined, was highly incensed at my perseverance, which he called obstinacy; but, what will not be so easily believed, he soon after relented, and appointed a day to take me from the convent. O! judge of my feelings when I received this intelligence. The joy it occasioned awakened all my gratitude; I forgot the former cruelty of my father, and that the present indulgence was less the effect of his kindness than of my resolution. I wept that I could not indulge his every wish.

What days of blissful expectation were those that preceded my departure! The world, from which I had been hitherto secluded—the world, in which my fancy had been so often delighted to roam—whose paths were strewn with fadeless roses—whose every scene smiled in beauty and invited to delight—where all the people were good, and all the good happy—ah! *then* that world was bursting upon my view. Let me catch the rapturous remembrance before it vanish! it is like the passing lights of autumn, that gleam for a moment on a hill, and then leave it to darkness. I counted the days and hours that withheld me from this fairy land, it was in the convent only that people were deceitful and cruel: it was there only that misery dwelt. I was quitting it all! How I pitied the poor nuns that were to be left behind. I would have given half that world I prized so much, had it been mine, to have taken them out with me.

The long wished for day at last arrived. My father came, and for a moment my joy was lost in the sorrow of bidding farewell to my poor companions, for whom I had never felt such warmth of kindness as at this instant. I

was soon beyond the gates of the convent. I looked around me, and viewed the vast vault of heaven no longer bounded by monastic walls, and the green earth extended in hill and dale to the round verge of the horizon! My heart danced with delight, tears swelled in my eyes, and for some moments I was unable to speak. My thoughts rose to Heaven in sentiments of gratitude to the giver of all good.

At length, I returned to my father: dear Sir, said I, how I thank you for my deliverance, and how I wish I could do every thing to oblige you.

Return, then, to your convent, said he, in a harsh accent. I shuddered; his look and manner jarred the tone of my feelings: they struck discord upon my heart, which had before responded only to harmony. The ardour of joy was in a moment repressed, and every object around me was saddened with the gloom of disappointment. It was not that I suspected my father would take me back to the convent; but that his feelings seemed so very dissonant of the joy and gratitude which I had but a moment before felt and expressed to him. —Pardon, madame, a relation of these trivial circumstances; the strong vicissitudes of feeling which they impressed upon my heart make me think them important, when they are, perhaps, only disgusting.

"No, my dear," said Madame La Motte, "they are interesting to me, they illustrate little traits of character, which I love to observe. You are worthy of all my regards, and from this moment I give my tenderest pity for your misfortunes, and my affection to your goodness."

These words melted the heart of Adeline; she kissed the hand which madame held out, and remained a few minutes silent. At length

she said, "May I deserve this goodness, and may I ever be thankful to God, who, in giving me such a friend, has raised me to comfort and hope."

My father's house was situated a few leagues on the other side of Paris, and in our way to it, we passed through that city. What a novel scene! Where were now the solemn faces, the demure manners I had been accustomed to see in the convent? Every countenance was here animated either by business or pleasure, every step was airy, and every smile was gay. All the people appeared like friends; they looked and smiled at me; I smiled again, and wished to have told them how pleased I was. How delightful, said I, to live surrounded by friends!

What crowded streets! What magnificent hotels! What splendid equipages! I scarcely observed that the streets were narrow, or the way dangerous. What bustle, what tumult, what delight! I could never be sufficiently thankful that I was removed from the convent. Again I was going to express my gratitude to my father, but his looks forbade me, and I was silent. I am too diffuse; even the faint forms which memory reflects of passed delight are grateful to the heart. The shadow of pleasure is still gazed upon with a melancholy enjoyment, though the substance is fled beyond our reach.

Having quitted Paris, which I left with many sighs, and gazed upon till the towers of every church dissolved in distance from my view; we entered upon a gloomy and unfrequented road. It was evening when we reached a wild heath; I looked round in search of a human dwelling, but could find none; and not a human being was to be seen. I experienced something of what I used to feel in the convent; my heart had not been so sad since I

left it. Of my father, who still sat in silence, I inquired if we were near home; he answered in the affirmative. Night came on, however, before we reached the place of our destination; it was a lone house on the waste; but I need not describe it to you, madame. When the carriage stopped, two men appeared at the door, and assisted us to alight; so gloomy were their countenances and so few their words, I almost fancied myself again in the convent.

Certain it is, I had not seen such melancholy faces since I quitted it. Is this a part of the world I have so fondly contemplated? said I.

The interior appearance of the house was desolate and mean; I was surprised that my father had chosen such a place for his habitation, and also that no woman was to be seen; but I knew that inquiry would only produce a reproof, and was therefore silent. At supper, the two men I had before seen sat down with us; they said little, but seemed to observe me much I was confused and displeased, which, my father noticing, frowned at them with a look, which convinced me he meant more than I comprehended. When the cloth was drawn, my father took my hand and conducted me to the door of my chamber; having set down the candle, and wished me good night, he left me to my own solitary thoughts.

How different were they from those I had indulged a few hours before! then expectation, hope, delight, danced before me; now melancholy and disappointment chilled the ardour of my mind, and discoloured my future prospect. The appearance of every thing around conduced to depress me On the floor lay a small bed without curtains, or hangings; two old chairs and a table were all the remaining furniture in the room. I went to the window, with an intention of looking out upon the sur-

rounding scene, and found it was grated, I was shocked at this circumstance, and, comparing it with the lonely situation, and the strange appearance of the house, together with the countenances and behaviour of the men, who had supped with us, I was lost in a labyrinth of conjecture.

At length I lay down to sleep; but the anxiety of my mind prevented repose; gloomy, unpleasing images flitted before my fancy, and I fell into a sort of waking dream: I thought that I was in a lonely forest with my father; his looks were severe, and his gestures menacing; he upbraided me for leaving the convent, and while he spoke, drew from his pocket a mirror, which he held before my face; I looked in it and saw, (my blood now thrills as I repeat it) I saw myself wounded, and bleeding profusely. Then I thought myself in the house again, and suddenly heard these words in accents so distinct, that for some time after I awoke, I could scarcely believe them ideal, "Depart this house, destruction hovers here."

I was awakened by a footstep on the stairs; it was my father retiring to his chamber; the lateness of the hour surprised me, for it was past midnight.

On the following morning, the party of the preceding evening assembled at breakfast, and were as gloomy and silent as before. The table was spread by a boy of my father's, but the cook and the housemaid, wherever they might be, were invisible.

The next morning, I was surprised, on attempting to leave my chamber, to find the door locked; I waited a considerable time before I ventured to call; when I did, no answer was returned; I then went to the window, and called more loudly, but my own voice was still the only sound I heard. Near an hour I pass-

ed in a state of surprise and terror not to be described: at length, I heard a person coming up stairs, and I renewed the call; I was answered, that my father had that morning sat off for Paris, whence he would return in a few days; in the meanwhile he had ordered me to be confined in my chamber. On my expressing surprise and apprehension at this circumstance, I was assured I had nothing to fear, and that I should live as well as if I was at liberty.

The latter part of this speech seemed to contain an odd kind of comfort; I made little reply, but submitted to necessity. Once more I was abandoned to sorrowful reflection; what a day was the one I now passed alone, and agitated with grief and apprehension. I endeavoured to conjecture the cause of this harsh treatment; and, at length concluded it was designed by my father, as a punishment for my former disobedience. But why abandon me to the power of strangers, to men, whose countenances bore the stamp of villany so strongly as to impress even my inexperienced mind with terror! Surmise involved me only deeper in perplexity, yet I found it impossible to forbear pursuing the subject; and the day was divided between lamentation and conjecture. Night at length came, and such a night! Darkness brought new terrors: I looked round the chamber for some means of fastening my door on the inside, but could perceive none; at last I contrived to place the back of a chair in an oblique direction, so as to render it secure.

I had scarcely done this, and laid down upon my bed in my clothes, not to sleep, but to watch, when I heard a rap at the door of the house, which was opened and shut so quickly, that the person who had knocked, seemed only to deliver a letter or message. Soon after, I heard voices at intervals in a room below stairs,

sometimes speaking very low, and sometimes rising, all together, as if in dispute. Something more excusable than curiosity made me endeavour to distinguish what was said, but in vain; now and then a word or two reached me, and once I heard my name repeated, but no more.

Thus passed the hours till midnight, when all became still. I had laid for some time in a state between fear and hope, when I heard the lock of my door gently moved backward and forward; I started up, and listened; for a moment it was still, then the noise returned, and I heard a whispering without; my spirits died away, but I was yet sensible. Presently an effort was made at the door, as if to force it; I shrieked aloud, and immediately heard the voices of the men I had seen at my father's table: they called loudly for the door to be opened, and on my returning no answer, uttered dreadful execrations. I had just strength sufficient to move to the window, in the desperate hope of escaping thence; but my feeble efforts could not even shake the bars. O! how can I recollect these moments of horror, and be sufficiently thankful that I am now in safety and comfort!

They remained some time at the door, then they quitted it, and went down stairs. How my heart revived at every step of their departure; I fell upon my knees, thanked God that he had preserved me this time, and implored his farther protection. I was rising from this short prayer, when suddenly I heard a noise in a different part of the room, and on looking round, I perceived the door of a small closet open, and two men enter the chamber.

They seized me, and I sunk senseless in their arms; how long I remained in this condition I know not, but on reviving, I perceived my-

self again alone, and heard several voices from below stairs. I had presence of mind to run to the door of the closet, my only chance of escape: but it was locked! I then recollected it was possible, that the ruffians might have forgot to turn the key of the chamber door, which was held by the chair; but here, also, I was disappointed. I clasped my hands in an agony of despair, and stood for some time immoveable.

A violent noise from below roused me, and soon after I heard people ascending the stairs: I now gave myself up for lost. The steps approached, the door of the closet was again unlocked. I stood calmly, and again saw the men enter the chamber; I neither spoke nor resisted; the faculties of my soul were wrought up beyond the power of feeling; as a violent blow on the body stuns for awhile the sense of pain. They led me down stairs; the door of a room below was thrown open, and I beheld a stranger; it was then that my senses returned; I shrieked and resisted, but was forced along. It is unnecessary to say that this stranger was Monsieur La Motte, or to add, that I shall for ever bless him as my deliverer.

Adeline ceased to speak; Madame La Motte remained silent. There were some circumstances in Adeline's narrative, which raised all her curiosity. She asked if Adeline believed her father to be a party in this mysterious affair. Adeline thought it was impossible to doubt that he had been principally and materially concerned in some part of it, or said she thought he was innocent of any intention against her life. "Yet, what motive," said Madame La Motte, "could there be for a degree of cruelty so apparently unprofitable?" Here the inquiry ended; and Adeline

confessed she had pursued it, till her mind shrunk from all farther research.

The sympathy which such uncommon misfortune excited, Madame La Motte now expressed without reserve, and this expression of it strengthened the tie of mutual friendship. Adeline felt her spirits relieved by the disclosure she had made to Madame La Motte; and the latter acknowledged the value of the confidence, by an increase of affectionate attentions.

CHAPTER IV.

"My May of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf."
Macbeth.

"Full oft, unknowing and unknown,
He wore the endless noons alone,
Amid the autumnal wood:
Oft was he wont, in hasty fit,
Abrupt the social board to quit."
Wharton.

La Motte had now passed above a month in this seclusion, and his wife had the pleasure to see him recover tranquillity and even cheerfulness. In this pleasure Adeline warmly participated; and she might justly have congratulated herself, as one cause of his restoration; her cheerfulness and delicate attention had effected what Madame La Motte's greater anxiety had failed to accomplish. La Motte did not seem regardless of her amiable disposition, and sometimes thanked her in a manner more earnest than was usual with him. She, in her turn, considered him as her only protector, and now felt towards him the affection of a daughter.

The time she had spent in this peaceful retirement had softened the remembrance of past events, and restored her mind to its natural tone; and when memory brought back to her view her former short and romantic expectations of happiness, though she gave a sigh to the rapturous illusion, she less lamented the disappointment, than rejoiced in her present security and comfort.

But the satisfaction which La Motte's cheerfulness diffused around him was of short continuance; he became suddenly gloomy and reserved; the society of his family was no longer grateful to him; and he would spend whole hours in the most secluded parts of the forest, devoted to melancholy and secret grief. He did not, as formerly, indulge the humour of his sadness, without restraint, in the presence of others; he now evidently endeavoured to conceal it, and affected a cheerfulness that was too artificial to escape detection.

His servant Peter, either impelled by curiosity or kindness, sometimes followed him unseen into the forest. He observed him frequently retire to one particular spot, in a remote part, which having gained, he always disappeared before Peter, who was obliged to follow at a distance, could exactly notice where. All his endeavours, now prompted by wonder and invigorated by disappointment, were unsuccessful, and he was at length compelled to endure the tortures of unsatisfied curiosity.

This change in the manners and habits of her husband was too conspicuous to pass unobserved by Madame La Motte, who endeavoured, by all the stratagems which affection could suggest, or female invention supply, to win him to her confidence. He seemed insensible to the influence of the first, and withstood the wiles of the latter. Finding all her efforts in-

sufficient to dissipate the glooms which overhung his mind, or to penetrate their secret cause, she desisted from farther attempts, and endeavoured to submit to this mysterious distress.

Week after week elapsed, and the same unknown cause sealed the lips and corroded the heart of La Motte. The place of his visitation in the forest had not been traced. Peter had frequently examined round the spot where his master disappeared, but had never discovered any recess which could be supposed to conceal him. The astonishment of the servant was at length raised to an insupportable degree, and he communicated to his mistress the subject of it.

The emotion, which this information excited, she disguised from Peter, and reproved him for the means he had taken to gratify his curiosity. But she revolved this circumstance in her thoughts, and comparing it with the late alterations in his temper, her uneasiness was renewed, and her perplexity considerably increased. After much consideration, being unable to assign any other motive for his conduct, she began to attribute it to the influence of illicit passion, and her heart, which now outran her judgment, confirmed the supposition, and roused all the torturing pangs of jealousy.

Comparatively speaking, she had never known affliction till now: she had abandoned her dearest friends and connexions—had relinquished the gayeties, the luxuries, and almost the necessaries of life;—fled with her family into exile, an exile the most dreary and comfortless; experiencing the evils of reality, and those of apprehension, united: all these she had patiently endured, supported by the affection of him, for whose sake she suffered.

Though that affection, indeed, had for some time appeared to be abated, she had borne its decrease with fortitude: but the last stroke of calamity, hitherto withheld, now came with irresistible force—the love of which she lamented the loss, she now believed was transferred to another.

The operation of strong passion confuses the powers of reason, and warps them on its own particular direction. Her usual degree of judgment, unopposed by the influence of her heart, would probably have pointed out to Madame La Motte some circumstances upon the subject of her distress, equivocal, if not contradictory to her suspicions. No such circumstances appeared to her, and she did not long hesitate to decide, that Adeline was the object of her husband's attachment. Her beauty out of the question, who else, indeed, could it be in a spot thus secluded from the world?

The same cause destroyed, almost at the same moment her only remaining comfort; and, when she wept that she could no longer look for happiness in the affection of La Motte, she wept also, that she could no longer seek solace in the friendship of Adeline. She had too great an esteem for her to doubt, at first, the integrity of her conduct, but, in spite of reason, her heart no longer expanded to her with its usual warmth of kindness. She shrunk from her confidence; and as the secret broodings of jealousy cherished her suspicions, she became less kind to her even in manner.

Adeline, observing the change, at first attributed it to accident, and afterwards to a temporary displeasure, arising from some little inadvertency in her conduct. She therefore increased her assiduities; but perceiving, contrary to all expectation, that her efforts to please failed of their usual consequence, and

that the reserve of Madame's manner rather increased than abated, she became seriously uneasy, and resolved to seek an explanation. This Madame La Motte as sedulously avoided, and was for some time able to prevent. Adeline, however, too much interested in the event to yield to delicate scruples, pressed the subject so closely, that Madame, at first agitated and confused, at length invented some idle excuse, and laughed off the affair

She now saw the necessity of subduing all appearance of reserve towards Adeline; and though her art could not conquer the prejudices of passion, it taught her to assume, with tolerable success, the aspect of kindness. Adeline was deceived, and was again at peace. Indeed, confidence in the sincerity and goodness of others was her weakness. But the pangs of stifled jealousy struck deep to the heart of Madame La Motte, and she resolved, at all events, to obtain some certainty upon the subject of her suspicions.

She now condescended to a meanness, which she had before despised, and ordered Peter to watch the steps of his master, in order to discover, if possible, the place of his visitation! So much did passion win upon her judgment, by time and indulgence, that she sometimes ventured even to doubt the integrity of Adeline, and afterwards proceeded to believe it possible that the object of La Motte's rambles might be an assignation with her. What suggested this conjecture was, that Adeline frequently took long walks alone in the forest, and sometimes was absent from the abbey for many hours. This circumstance, which Madame La Motte had at first attributed to Adeline's fondness for the picturesque beauties of nature, now operated forcibly upon her imagination, and she could view it in no other

light, than as affording an opportunity for secret conversation with her husband.

Peter obeyed the orders of his mistress with alacrity, for they were warmly seconded by his own curiosity. All his endeavours were, however, fruitless; he never dared to follow La Motte near enough to observe the place of his last retreat. Her impatience, thus heightened by delay, and her passion stimulated by difficulty, Madame La Motte now resolved to apply to her husband for an explanation of his conduct.

After some consideration, concerning the manner most likely to succeed with him, she went to La Motte, but when she entered the room where he sat, forgetting all her concerted address, she fell at his feet, and was, for some moments, lost in tears. Surprised at her attitude and distress, he inquired the occasion of it, and was answered, that it was caused by his own conduct. "My conduct! What part of it, pray?" inquired he.

"Your reserve, your secret sorrow, and frequent absence from the abbey."

"Is it then so wonderful that a man, who has lost almost every thing, should sometimes lament his misfortunes? or so criminal to attempt concealing his grief, that he must be blamed for it by those whom he would save from the pain of sharing it?"

Having uttered these words, he quitted the room, leaving Madame La Motte lost in surprise, but somewhat relieved from the pressure of her former suspicions. Still, however, she pursued Adeline with an eye of scrutiny; and the mask of kindness would sometimes fall off, and discover the features of distrust. Adeline, without exactly knowing why, felt less at ease and less happy in her presence than formerly; her spirits drooped, and she

would often, when alone, weep at the forlornness of her condition. Formerly, her remembrance of past sufferings was lost in the friendship of Madame La Motte; now, though her behaviour was too guarded to betray any striking instance of unkindness, there was something in her manner which chilled the hopes of Adeline, unable as she was to analyze it. But a circumstance, which soon occurred, suspended for awhile, the jealousy of Madame La Motte, and roused her husband from his state of gloomy stupefaction.

Peter, having been one day to Auboine for the weekly supply of provisions, returned with intelligence that awakened in La Motte new apprehension and anxiety.

"Oh, Sir, I've heard something that has astonished me, as well it may," cried Peter, "and so it will you, when you come to know it. As I was standing in the blacksmith's shop, while the smith was driving a nail into the horse's shoe, (by the by, the horse lost it in an odd way, I'll tell you, Sir, how it was)"—

"Nay, prithee, leave it till another time, and go on with your story?"

"Why then, Sir, as I was standing in the blacksmith's shop, comes in a man with a pipe in his mouth, and a large pouch of tobacco in his hand"—

"Well—what has the pipe to do with the story?"

"Nay, Sir, you put me out; I can't go on, unless you let me tell it my own way. As I was saying—with a pipe in his mouth—I think I was there, your Honour!"

"Yes, yes."

"He set himself down on the bench, and taking the pipe from his mouth, says to the blacksmith—Neighbour, do you know any body of the name of La Motte hereabouts?—

Bless your honour, I turned all of a cold sweat in a minute! Is not your honour well, shall I fetch you any thing?"

"No—but be short in your narrative."

"'La Motte! La Motte! said the blacksmith, I think I've heard the name.'—'Have you?' said I, 'you're cunning then, for there's no such person hereabouts, to my knowledge.'

"Fool! why did you say that?"

"Because I did not want them to know your honour was here; and if I had not managed very cleverly, they would have found me out. 'There is no such person hereabouts, to my knowledge,' says I.—'Indeed!' says the blacksmith, 'you know more of the neighbourhood than I do then.'—'Aye,' says the man with the pipe, 'that's very true. How came you to know so much of the neighbourhood? I came here twenty-six years ago, come next St. Michael, and you know more than I do. How came you to know so much?'

"With that he put his pipe in his mouth, and gave a whiff full in my face. Lord! your honour, I trembled from head to foot. 'Nay, as for that matter, says I, I don't know more than other people, but I'm sure I never heard of such a man as that.'—'Pray,' says the blacksmith, staring me full in the face, 'an't you the man that was inquiring some time since about St. Clair's Abbey?'—'Well, what of that?' says I, 'what does that prove?'—'Why, they say, somebody lives in the abbey now,' said the man, turning to the other; 'and, for aught I know, it may be this same La Motte.'—'Aye, or for aught I know either,' says the man with the pipe, getting up from the bench, 'and you may know more of this than you'll own. I'll lay my life on't, this Monsieur La Motte lives at the abbey.'—'Aye,' says I, 'you are out there, for he does not live at the abbey now.'"

"Confound your folly!" cried La Motte, "but be quick—how did the matter end?"

"My master does not live there now, said I —Oh! oh! said the man with the pipe; he is your master, then? And pray how long has he left the abbey—and where does he live now? Hold, said I, not so fast—I know when to speak and when to hold my tongue—but who has been inquiring for him?"

"'What! he expected somebody to inquire for him?' says the man—No,' says I, 'he did not, but if he did, what does that prove? that argues nothing.' With that he looked at the blacksmith, and they went out of the shop together, leaving my horse's shoe undone. But I never minded that, for the moment they were gone I mounted, and rode away as fast as I could. But in my fright, your honour, I forgot to take the roundabout way, and so came straight home."

La Motte, extremely shocked at Peter's intelligence, made no other reply than by cursing his folly, and immediately went in search of madame, who was walking with Adeline on the banks of the river. La Motte was too much agitated to soften his information by preface. "We are discovered!" said he, "the king's officers have been inquiring for me at Auboine, and Peter has blundered upon my ruin." He then informed her of what Peter had related, and bade her prepare to quit the abbey.

"But whither can we fly?" said Madame La Motte, scarcely able to support herself. "Any where!" said he, "to stay here is certain destruction. We must take refuge in Switzerland, I think. If any part of France would have concealed me, surely it had been this!"

"Alas, how are we persecuted!" rejoined madame. "This spot is scarcely made com-

fortable, before we are obliged to leave it, and go we know not whither."

"I wish we may not yet know whither," replied La Motte, "that is the least evil that threatens us. Let us escape a prison, and I care not whither we go. But return to the abbey immediately, and pack up what moveables, you can." A flood of tears came to the relief of Madame La Motte, and she hung upon Adeline's arm silent and trembling. Adeline, though she had no comfort to bestow, endeavoured to command her feelings, and appear composed. "Come," said La Motte, "we waste time; let us lament hereafter, but at present prepare for flight. Exert a little of that fortitude, which is so necessary for our preservation. Adeline does not weep, yet her state is as wretched as your own, for I know not how long I shall be able to protect her."

Notwithstanding her terror, this reproof touched the pride of Madame La Motte, who dried her tears, but disdained to reply, and looked at Adeline with a strong expression of displeasure. As they moved silently toward the abbey, Adeline asked La Motte if he was sure they were the king's officers, who inquired for him. "I cannot doubt it," he replied, "who else could possible inquire for me? Besides the behaviour of the man, who mentioned my name, puts the matter beyond a question."

"Perhaps not," said Madame La Motte: "let us wait till morning ere we set off. We may then find it will be unnecessary to go."

"We may, indeed; the king's officers would probably by that time have told us as much." La Motte went to give orders to Peter. "Set off in an hour," said Peter. "Lord bless you, master! only consider the coach wheel; it would take me a day at least to mend it, for

your honour knows I never mended one in my life."

This was a circumstance which La Motte had entirely overlooked. When they settled at the abbey, Peter had at first been too busy in repairing the apartments, to remember the carriage, and afterwards believing it would not quickly be wanted, he had neglected to do it. La Motte's temper now entirely forsook him, and with many execrations he ordered Peter to go to work immediately: but on searching for the materials formerly bought, they were no where to be found, and Peter at length remembered, though he was prudent enough to conceal this circumstance, that he had used the nails in repairing the abbey.

It was now, therefore, impossible to quit the forest that night, and La Motte had only to consider the most probable plan of concealment, should the officers of justice visit the ruin before the morning; a circumstance, which the thoughtlessness of Peter in returning from Auboine by the straight way made not unlikely.

At first, indeed, it occurred to him, that though his family could not be removed, he might himself take one of the horses and escape from the forest before night. But he thought there would still be some danger of detection in the town through which he must pass, and he could not well bear the idea of leaving his family unprotected, without knowing when he could return to them, or whither he could direct them to follow him. La Motte was not a man of very vigorous resolution, and he was perhaps rather more willing to suffer in company than alone.

After much consideration, he recollected the trapdoor of the closet belonging to the chambers above. It was invisible to the eye, and whatever might be its direction, it would se-

surely shelter *him*, at least, from discovery. Having deliberated farther upon the subject, he determined to explore the recess to which the stairs led, and thought it possible that for a short time his whole family might be concealed within it. There was little time between the suggestion of the plan and the execution of his purpose, for darkness was spreading around, and in every murmur of the wind he thought he heard the voices of his enemies.

He called for a light, and ascended alone to the chamber. When he came to the closet, it was some time before he could find the trap-door, so exactly did it correspond with the boards of the floor. At length, he found and raised it. The chill damps of long confined air rushed from the aperture, and he stood for a moment to let them pass ere he descended. As he stood looking down the abyss, he recollected the report, which Peter had brought concerning the abbey, and it gave him an uneasy sensation: but this soon yielded to more pressing interests.

The stairs were steep, and in many places trembled beneath his weight. Having continued to descend for some time, his feet touched the ground, and he found himself in a narrow passage; as he turned to pursue it, the damp vapours curled around him and extinguished the light. He called aloud to Peter, but could make nobody hear, and after some time, he endeavoured to find his way up the stairs. In this difficulty he succeeded, and passing the chambers with cautious steps, descended the tower.

The security which the place he had just quitted seemed to promise, was of too much importance to be slightly rejected, and he determined immediately to make another experiment with the light: having now fixed it

a lantern, he descended a second time to the passage. The current of vapours, occasioned by opening of the trapdoor, was abated, and the fresh air thence admitted had begun to circulate: La Motte passed on unmolested.

The passage was of considerable length, and led him to a door, which was fastened. He placed the lantern at some distance to avoid the current of air, and applied his strength to the door. It shook under his hands, but did not yield. Upon examining it more closely, he perceived the wood round the lock was decayed, probably by the damps, and this encouraged him to proceed. After some time it gave way to his effort, and he found himself in a square stone room.

He stood for some time to survey it. The walls, which were dripping with unwholesome dews, were entirely bare, and afforded not even a window. A small iron grate alone admitted the air. At the further end, near a low recess, was another door. La Motte went towards it, and as he passed, looked into the recess. Upon the ground within it, stood a large chest, which he went forward to examine, and lifting the lid, he saw the remains of a human skeleton. Horror struck upon his heart, and he involuntarily stepped back. During a pause of some moments, his first emotions subsided. That thrilling curiosity, which objects of terror often excite in the human mind, impelled him to take a second view of this dismal spectacle.

La Motte stood motionless as he gazed: the object before him seemed to confirm the report that some person had formerly been murdered in the abbey. At length he closed the chest, and advanced to the second door, which also was fastened, but the key was in the lock. He turned it with difficulty, and then found the door was held by two strong bolts. Having

undrawn these, it disclosed a flight of steps, which he descended. They terminated in a chain of low vaults, or rather cells, that, from the manner of their construction and present condition, seemed to have been coeval with the most ancient parts of the abbey. La Motte, in his then depressed state of mind, thought them the burial places of the monks, who formerly inhabited the pile above, but they were more calculated for places of penance for the living than of rest for the dead.

Having reached the extremity of these cells, the way was again closed by a door. La Motte now hesitated whether he should attempt to proceed any farther. The present spot seemed to afford the security he sought. Here he might pass the night unmolested by apprehension of discovery, and it was most probable, that if the officers arrived in the night, and found the abbey vacated, they would quit it before morning, or at least before he could have any occasion to emerge from concealment. These considerations restored his mind to a state of greater composure. His only immediate care was to bring his family as soon as possible to this place of security, lest the officers should come unawares upon them; and while he stood thus musing, he blamed himself for delay.

But an irresistible desire of knowing to what this door led, arrested his steps, and he turned to open it. The door however was fastened, and as he attempted to force it, he suddenly thought he heard a noise above. It now occurred to him, that the officers might already have arrived, and he quitted the cells with precipitation, intending to listen at the trap-door.

There, said he, I may wait in security, and perhaps hear something of what passes. My family will not be known, or at least, not hurt.

and their uneasiness on my account they must learn to endure."

These were the arguments of La Motte, in which it must be owned, selfish prudence was more conspicuous than tender anxiety for his wife. He had by this time reached the bottom of the stairs, when on looking up he perceived the trapdoor was left open, and ascending in haste to close it, he heard footsteps advancing through the chamber above. Before he could descend entirely out of sight, he again looked up, and perceived through the aperture the face of a man looking down upon him. "Master," cried Peter; La Motte was somewhat relieved at the sound of his voice, though angry that he had occasioned him so much terror.

"What brings you here, and what is the matter below?"

"Nothing, Sir, nothing's the matter, only my mistress sent me to see after your honour."

"There's nobody there then," said La Motte, setting his foot upon the step.

"Yes, Sir, there is my mistress, and mademoiselle Adeline, and"—

"Well, well," said La Motte briskly, "go your ways, I am coming."

He informed Madame La Motte where he had been, and of his intention of secreting himself; and deliberated upon the means of convincing the officers, should they arrive, that he had quitted the abbey. For this purpose, he ordered all the moveable furniture to be conveyed to the cells below. La Motte himself assisted in this business, and every hand was employed for dispatch. In a very short time, the habitable part of the fabric was left almost as desolate as he had found it. He then bade Peter take the horses to a distance from the abbey, and turn them loose. After farther consideration, he thought it might con-

tribute to mislead them if he placed in some conspicuous part of the fabric an inscription, signifying his condition, and mentioning the date of his departure from the abbey. Over the door of the tower which led to the habitable part of the structure, he therefore cut the following lines.

"O ye! whom misfortune may lead to this spot,
Learn that there are others as miserable as yourselves"

P——— L ——— M ———
a wretched exile, sought within these walls a refuge from persecution, on the 27th of April, 1658, and quitted them on the 12th of July in the same year, in search of a more convenient asylum.

After engraving these words with a knife, the small stock of provisions remaining from the week's supply, (for Peter, in his fright, had returned unloaded from his last journey) was put into a basket, and La Motte having assembled his family, they all ascended the stairs of the tower, and passed through the chambers to the closet. Peter went first with a light, and with some difficulty found the trapdoor. Madame La Motte shuddered as she surveyed the gloomy abyss; but they were all silent.

La Motte now took the light, and led the way; madame followed, and then Adeline. "These old monks loved good wine, as well as other people," said Peter, who brought up the rear. "I warrant your honour, now, this was their cellar; I smell the casks already."

"Peace," said La Motte, "reserve your jokes for a proper occasion."

"There is no harm in loving good wine, as your honour knows."

"Have done with this buffoonery," said La Motte, in a tone more authoritative, "and go first." Peter obeyed.

They came to the vaulted room. The dismal spectacle he had seen there, deterred La Motte from passing the night in this chamber; and the furniture had, by his own order, been conveyed to the cells below. He was anxious that his family should not perceive the skeleton; an object which would probably excite a degree of horror not to be overcome during their stay. La Motte now passed the chest in haste, and Madame La Motte and Adeline were too much engrossed by their own thoughts, to pay minute attention to external circumstances.

When they reached the cells, madame La Motte wept at the necessity which condemned her to a spot so dismal. "Alas," said she, "are we, indeed, thus reduced! The apartments above, formerly appeared to me a deplorable habitation; but they are a palace compared to these."

"True, my dear," said La Motte, "and let the remembrance of what you once thought them, soothe your discontent now; these cells are also a palace, compared to the Bicetre, or the Bastile, and to the terrors of farther punishment, which would accompany them: let the apprehension of the greater evil teach you to endure the less: I am contented if we find here the refuge I seek."

Madame La Motte was silent, and Adeline, forgetting her late unkindness, endeavoured as much as she could to console her; while her heart was sinking with the misfortunes, which she could not but anticipate, she appeared composed and even cheerful. She attended Madame La Motte with the most watchful solicitude, and felt so thankful that La Motte was now secreted within this recess, that she almost lost her perception of its glooms and inconveniences.

This she artlessly expressed to him, who

could not be insensible to the tenderness it discovered. Madame La Motte was also sensible of it, and it renewed a painful sensation. The effusions of gratitude she mistook for those of tenderness.

La Motte returned frequently to the trap-door, to listen if any body was in the abbey; but no sound disturbed the stillness of night; at length they sat down to supper; the repast was a melancholy one. "If the officers do not come hither to-night," said Madame La Motte, sighing, "suppose, my dear, Peter returns to Auboine to-morrow. He may there learn something more of this affair; or at least, he might procure a carriage to convey us hence."

"To be sure he might," said La Motte, peevishly, "and people to attend it also. Peter would be an excellent person to show the officers the way to the abbey, and to inform them of what they might else be in doubt about my concealment here."

"How cruel is this irony!" replied Madame La Motte, "I proposed only what I thought would be for our mutual good; my judgment was, perhaps, wrong, but my intention was certainly right." Tears swelled into her eyes as she spoke these words. Adeline wished to relieve her; but delicacy kept her silent. La Motte observed the effect of his speech, and something like remorse touched his heart. He approached, and taking her hand, "You must allow for the perturbation of my mind," said he, "I did not mean to afflict you thus. The idea of sending Peter to Auboine, where he has already done so much harm by his blunders, teased me, and I could not let is pass unnoticed. No, my dear, our only chance of safety is to remain where we are while our provisions last. If the officers do not come

here to-night, they probably will to-morrow, or perhaps the next day. When they have searched the abbey, without finding me, they will depart; we may then emerge from this recess, and take measures for removing to a distant country."

Madame La Motte acknowledged the justice of his words, and her mind being relieved by the little apology he had made, she became tolerably cheerful. Supper being ended, La Motte stationed the faithful, though simple Peter, at the foot of the steps that ascended to the closet; there to keep watch during the night. Having done this, he returned to the lower cells, where he had left his little family. The beds were spread, and having mournfully bid each other good night, they laid down and implored rest.

Adeline's thoughts were soo busy to suffer her to repose, and when she believed her companions were sunk in slumbers, she indulged the sorrow which reflection brought. She also looked forward to the future with the most mournful apprehension. Should La Motte be seized, what was to become of her? She would then be a wanderer in the wide world; without friends to protect, or money to support her; the prospect was gloomy, was terrible! She surveyed it and shuddered! The distresses too of Monsieur and Madame La Motte, whom she loved with the most lively affection, formed no inconsiderable part of her's.

Sometimes she looked back to her father; but in him she only saw an enemy, from whom she must fly; this remembrance heightened her sorrow; yet it was not the recollection of the suffering he had occasioned her, by which she was so much afflicted, as by the sense of his unkindness; she wept bitterly. At length, with that artless piety, which innocence only

knows, she addressed the Supreme Being, and resigned herself to his care. Her mind then gradually became peaceful and reassured, and soon after she sunk to repose.

CHAPTER V.

A surprise—an adventure—a mystery.

THE night passed without any alarm: Peter had remained upon his post, and heard nothing that prevented his sleeping. La Motte heard him, long before he saw him, most musically snoring; though it must be owned, there was more of the bass than of any other part of the gamut in his performance. He was soon roused by the *bravura* of La Motte, whose notes sounded discord to his ears, and destroyed the torpor of his tranquillity.

"God bless you, master, what's the matter?" cried Peter, waking, "are they come?"

"Yes, for aught you care, they might be come. Did I place you here to sleep, sirrah?"

"Bless you, master," returned Peter, "sleep is the only comfort to be had here; I'm sure I would not deny it to a dog in such a place as this."

La Motte sternly questioned him concerning any noise he might have heard in the night; and Peter full as solemnly protested he had heard none; an assertion which was strictly true, for he had enjoyed the comfort of being asleep the whole time.

La Motte ascended to the trapdoor, and listened attentively. No sounds were heard, and as he ventured to lift it, the full light of the sun burst upon his sight, the morning being now far advanced; he walked softly along the

chambers, and looked through a window; no person was to be seen. Encouraged by this apparent security, he ventured down the stairs of the tower, and entered the first apartment. He was proceeding towards the second, when, suddenly recollecting himself, he first peeped through the crevice of the door, which stood half open. He looked, and distinctly saw a person sitting near the window, upon which his arm rested.

The discovery so much shocked him, that for a moment he lost all presence of mind, and was utterly unable to move from the spot. The person whose back was towards him, arose, and turned his head. La Motte now recovered himself, and quitting the apartment as quickly, and at the same time, as silently as possible, ascended to the closet. He raised the trapdoor, but before he closed it, heard the footsteps of a person entering the outer chamber. Bolts, or other fastening to the trap there was none; and his security depended solely upon the exact correspondence of the boards. The outer door of the stone room had no means of defence; and the fastenings of the inner one were on the wrong side to afford security, even till some means of escape could be found.

When he reached this room he paused, and heard distinctly persons walking in the closet above. While he was listening he heard a voice call him by name, and he instantly fled to the cells below, expecting every moment to hear the trap lifted, and the footsteps of pursuit; but he was fled beyond the reach of hearing either. Having thrown himself on the ground at the furthest extremity of the vaults, he lay for some time breathless with agitation. Madame La Motte and Adeline, in the utmost terror, inquired what had happened. It was

some time before he could speak; when he did, it was almost unnecessary, for the distant noises which sounded from above informed his family of a part of the truth.

The sounds did not seem to approach, but Madame La Motte, unable to command her terror, shrieked aloud; this redoubled the distress of La Motte. "You have already destroyed me;" cried he, "that shriek has informed them where I am." He traversed the cells with clasped hands and quick steps. Adeline stood pale and still as death, supporting Madame La Motte, whom with difficulty she prevented from fainting. "O! Dupras! Dupras! you are already avenged!" said he, in a voice that seemed to burst from his heart: there was a pause of silence. "But why should I deceive myself with the hope of escaping?" he resumed, "why do I wait here for their coming? Let me rather end these torturing pangs by throwing myself into their hands at once."

As he spoke, he moved towards the door, but the distress of Madame La Motte arrested his steps. "Stay," said she, "for my sake, stay; do not leave me thus, nor throw yourself voluntarily into destruction?"

"Surely, Sir," said Adeline, "you are too precipitate; this despair is as useless as it is ill-founded. We hear no person approaching; if the officers had discovered the trapdoor, they would certainly have been here before now." The words of Adeline stilled the tumult of his mind: the agitation of terror subsided; and reason beamed a feeble ray upon his hopes. He listened attentively, and perceiving that all was silent, advanced with caution to the stone-room; and thence to the foot of the stairs that led to the trapdoor. It was closed: no sound was heard above.

He watched a long time, and the silence continuing, his hopes strengthened, and at length he began to believe that the officers had quitted the abbey; the day however was spent in anxious watchfulness. He did not dare to unclose the trapdoor: and he frequently thought he heard distant noises. It was evident, however, that the secret of the closet had escaped discovery; and on this circumstance he justly founded his security. The following night was passed like the day, in trembling hope, and incessant watching.

But the necessities of hunger now threatened them. The provisions, which had been distributed with the nicest economy, were nearly exhausted, and the most deplorable consequences might be expected from their remaining longer in concealment. Thus circumstanced, La Motte deliberated upon the most prudent method of proceeding. There appeared no other alternative than to send Peter to Auboine, the only town from which he could return within the time prescribed by their necessities. There was game, indeed, in the forest? but Peter could neither handle a gun, or use a fishing rod to any advantage.

It was, therefore, agreed he should go to Auboine for a supply of provisions, and at the same time bring materials for mending the coach-wheel, that they might have some ready conveyance from the forest. La Motte forbade Peter to ask any questions concerning the people who had inquired for him, or to take any methods for discovering whether they had quitted the country, lest his blunders should again betray him. He ordered him to be entirely silent as to these subjects, and leave the place with all possible dispatch.

A difficulty yet remained to be overcome—who should first venture abroad into the abbey,

to learn whether it was vacated by the officers of justice? La Motte considered that if he was again seen, he should be effectually betrayed; which would not be so certain if one of his family was observed, for they were all unknown to the officers. It was necessary, however, that the person he sent should have courage enough to go through with the inquiry, and wit enough to conduct it with caution. Peter, perhaps, had the first; but was certainly destitute of the last. Annette had neither. La Motte looked at his wife, and asked her if, for his sake, she dared to venture. Her heart shrunk from the proposal, yet she was unwilling to refuse, or appear indifferent upon a point so essential to the safety of her husband. Adeline observed in her countenance the agitation of her mind, and surmounting the fears, which had hitherto kept her silent, she offered herself to go.

"They will be less likely to offend me," said she, "than a man." Shame would not suffer La Motte to accept her offer; and Madame, touched by the magnanimity of her conduct, felt a momentary renewal of all her former kindness. Adeline pressed her proposal so warmly, and seemed so much in earnest, that La Motte began to hesitate. "You, Sir," said she, "once preserved me from the most imminent danger, and your kindness has since protected me. Do not refuse me the satisfaction of deserving your goodness by a grateful return of it. Let me go into the abbey, and if by so doing, I should preserve you from evil, I shall be sufficiently rewarded for what little danger I may incur, for my pleasure will be at least equal to yours."

Madame La Motte could scarcely refrain from tears as Adeline spoke; and La Motte sighing deeply, said, "Well, be it so; go,

Adeline, and from this moment consider me as your debtor." Adeline stayed not to reply, but taking a light, quitted the cells, La Motte following to raise the trapdoor, and cautioning her to look, if possible, into every apartment, before she entered it. "If you *should* be seen," said he, "you must account for your appearance so as not to discover me. Your own presence of mind may assist you, I cannot.—God bless you."

When she was gone, Madame La Motte's admiration of her conduct began to yield to other emotions. Distrust gradually undermined kindness, and jealousy raised suspicions. "It must be a sentiment more powerful than gratitude," thought she, "that could teach Adeline to subdue her fears. What but love could influence her to a conduct so generous!" Madame La Motte, when she found it impossible to account for Adeline's conduct, without alleging some interested motives for it, however her suspicions might agree with the practice of the world, had surely forgotten how much she once admired the purity and disinterestedness of her young friend.

Adeline, meanwhile, ascended the chambers; the cheerful beams of the sun played once more upon her sight, and reanimated her spirits; she walked lightly through the apartments, nor stopped till she came to the stairs of the tower. Here she stood for some time, but no sounds met her ear, save the sighing of the wind among the trees, and at length she descended. She passed the apartments below, without seeing any person; and the little furniture that remained, seemed to stand exactly as she had left it. She now ventured to look out from the tower; the only animate objects that appeared were the deer quietly grazing under the shade of the woods. Her favourite

little fawn distinguished Adeline, and came bounding towards her with strong marks of joy. She was somewhat alarmed lest the animal, being observed, should betray her, and walked swiftly away through the cloisters.

She opened the door that led to the great hall of the abbey, but the passage was so gloomy and dark that she feared to enter it, and started back. It was necessary, however, that she should examine farther, particularly on the opposite side of the ruin, of which she had hitherto had no view: but her fears returned when she recollected how far it would lead her from her only place of refuge, and how difficult it would be to retreat. She hesitated what to do: but when she recollected her obligations to La Motte, and considered this as perhaps her only opportunity of doing him a service, she determined to proceed.

As these thoughts passed rapidly over her mind, she raised her innocent looks to heaven, and breathed a silent prayer. With trembling steps she proceeded over fragments of the ruin, looking anxiously around, and often starting as the breeze rustled among the trees, mistaking it for the whisperings of men. She came to the lawn which fronted the fabric, but no person was to be seen, and her spirits revived. The great door of the hall she now endeavoured to open, but suddenly remembering that it was fastened by La Motte's orders, she proceeded to the north end of the abbey, and having surveyed the prospect around as far as the thick foliage of the trees would permit, without perceiving any person, she turned her steps to the tower from which she had issued.

Adeline was now light of heart, and returned with impatience to inform La Motte of his security. In the cloisters she was again met by her little favourite, and stopped for a mo-

ment to caress it. The fawn seemed sensible to the sound of her voice, and discovered new joy; but while she spoke, it suddenly started from her hand, and looking up she perceived the door of the passage, leading to the great hall open, and a man in the habit of a soldier issue forth.

With the swiftness of an arrow she fled along the cloisters, nor once ventured to look back; but a voice called to her to stop, and she heard steps advancing quick in pursuit. Before she could reach the tower, her breath failed her, and she leaned against the pillar of the ruin, pale and exhausted. The man came up, and gazing at her with a strong expression of surprise and curiosity, he assumed a gentle manner, assured her she had nothing to fear, and inquired if she belonged to La Motte: observing that she still looked terrified, and remained silent, he repeated his assurances and his question.

"I know that he is concealed within the ruin," said the stranger; "the occasion of his concealment I also know; but it is of the utmost importance I should see him, and he will then be convinced he has nothing to fear from me." Adeline trembled so excessively, that it was with difficulty she could support herself—she hesitated, and knew not what to reply. Her manner seemed to confirm the suspicions of the stranger, and her consciousness of this increased her embarrassment: he took advantage of it to press her farther. Adeline, at length replied that "La Motte had some time since resided at the abbey." "And does still, madam," said the stranger; "lead me to where he may be found—I must see him, and"—

"Never, Sir," replied Adeline, "and I solemnly assure you it will be in vain to search for him."

"That I must try," resumed he, "since you, madam, will not assist me. I have already followed him to some chambers above, where I suddenly lost him: thereabouts he must be concealed, and it is plain, therefore, they afford some secret passage."

Without waiting Adeline's reply, he sprung to the door of the tower. She now thought it would betray a consciousness of the truth of his conjecture to follow him, and resolved to remain below. Upon farther consideration, it occurred to her, that he might steal silently into the closet, and possibly surprise La Motte at the door of the trap. She, therefore, hastened after him, that her voice might prevent the danger she apprehended. He was already in the second chamber, when the overtook him, she immediately began to speak aloud.

This room he searched with the most scrupulous care, but finding no private door, or other outlet, he proceeded to the closet; then it was that it required all her fortitude to conceal her agitation. He continued the search. "Within these chambers I know he is concealed," said he, "though hitherto I have not been able to discover how. It was hither I followed a man, whom I believe to be him, and he could not escape without a passage; I shall not quit the place till I have found it."

He examined the walls and the boards, but without discovering the division of the floor, which indeed, so exactly corresponded, that La Motte himself had not perceived by the eye, but by the trembling of the floor beneath his feet. "Here is some mystery," said the stranger, "which I cannot comprehend and perhaps never shall." He was turning to quit the closet, when, who can paint the distress of Adeline, upon seeing the trapdoor gently raised, and La Motte himself appear-

ed. "Hah!" cried the stranger, advancing eagerly to him. La Motte sprang forward, and they were locked in each other's arms.

The astonishment of Adeline, for a moment, surpassed even her former distress; but a remembrance darted across her mind, which explained the present scene, and before La Motte could exclaim, "my son!" she knew the stranger as such. Peter, who stood at the foot of the stairs, and heard what passed above, flew to acquaint his mistress with the joyful discovery, and in a few moments she was folded in the embrace of her son. This spot so lately the mansion of despair, seemed metamorphosed into the palace of pleasure, and the walls echoed only to the accents of joy and congratulation.

The joy of Peter on this occasion was beyond expression: he acted a perfect pantomime—he capered about, clasped his hands—ran to his young master—shook him by the hand, in spite of the frowns of La Motte! ran every where without knowing for what, and gave no rational answer to any thing that was said to him.

After their first emotions were subsided, La Motte, as if suddenly recollecting himself, resumed his wonted solemnity: "I am to blame," said he, "thus to give way to joy, when I am still perhaps surrounded by danger. Let us secure a retreat while it is yet in our power," continued he, "in a few hours the king's officers may search for me again."

Louis comprehended his father's words, and immediately relieved his apprehensions by the following relation:

"A letter from Monsieur Nemours, containing an account of your flight from Paris, reached me at Peronne, where I was then upon duty with my regiment. He mentioned

that you were gone towards the south of France, but as he had not since heard from you, he was ignorant of the place of your refuge. It was about this time that I was dispatched into Flanders: and, being unable to obtain farther intelligence of you, I passed some weeks of very painful solicitude. At the conclusion of the campaign, I obtained leave of absence, and immediately set out for Paris, hoping to learn, from Nemours, where you had found an asylum.

"Of this, however, he was equally ignorant with myself. He informed me that you had once before written to him from D——, upon your second day's journey from Paris, under an assumed name, as had been agreed upon; and that you then said the fear of discovery would prevent your hazarding another letter. He, therefore, remained ignorant of your abode, but said he had no doubt you had continued your journey to the southward. Upon this slender information I quitted Paris in search of you, and proceeded immediately to V——, where my inquiries concerning your farther progress, were successful as far as M——. There they told me you had staid some time, on account of the illness of a young lady; a circumstance which perplexed me much, as I could not imagine what young lady would accompany you. I proceeded, however, to L——; but there all traces of you seemed to be lost. As I sat musing at the window of the inn, I observed some scribbling on the glass, and the curiosity of idleness prompted me to read it. I thought I knew the characters, and the lines I read confirmed my conjecture, for I remembered to have heard you often repeat them.

"Here I renewed my inquiries concerning your route, and at length made the people of

the inn recollect you, and traced you as far as Auboine. There I again lost you, till upon my return from a fruitless inquiry in the neighbourhood, the landlord of the little inn where I lodged, told me he believed he had heard news of you, and immediately recounted what had happened at a blacksmith's shop a few hours before.

"His description of Peter was so exact, that I had not a doubt it was you, who inhabited the abbey; and, as I knew your necessity for concealment, Peter's denial did not shake my confidence. The next morning, with the assistance of my landlord, I found my way hither, and, having searched every visible part of the fabric, I began to credit Peter's assertion: your appearance, however, destroyed this fear, by proving that the place was still inhabited, for you disappeared so instantaneously, that I was not certain it was you whom I had seen. I continued seeking you till near the close of the day, and till then scarcely quitted the chambers where you had disappeared. I called on you repeatedly, believing that my voice might convince you of your mistake. At length I retired to pass the night at a cottage near the border of the forest.

"I came early this morning to renew my inquiries, and hoped that, believing yourself safe, you would emerge from concealment. But how was I disappointed to find the abbey silent and solitary as I had left it the preceding evening! I was returning once more from the great hall, when the voice of this young lady caught my ear, and effected the discovery I had so anxiously sought."

This little narrative entirely dissipated the late apprehensions of La Motte, but he now dreaded that the inquiries of his son, and his own obvious desire of concealment, might ex-

cite a curiosity amongst the people of Auboine, and lead to a discovery of his true circumstances. However, for the present, he determined to dismiss all painful thoughts, and endeavoured to enjoy the comfort which the presence of his son had brought him. The furniture was removed to a more habitable part of the abbey, and the cells were again abandoned to their own glooms.

The arrival of her son seemed to have animated Madame La Motte with new life, and all her afflictions were, for the present, absorbed in joy. She often gazed silently on him with a mother's fondness, and her partiality heightened every improvement which time had wrought in his person and manner. He was now in his twenty-third year; his person was manly and his air military; his manners were unaffected and graceful, rather than dignified; and though his features were irregular, they composed a countenance which, having seen it once, you would seek it again.

She made eager inquiries after the friends she had left at Paris, and learned that within the few months of her absence, some had died and others had quitted the place. La Motte also learned, that a very strenuous search for him had been prosecuted at Paris; and though this intelligence was only what he had before expected, it shocked him so much, that he now declared it would be expedient to remove to a distant country. Louis did not scruple to say, that he thought he would be as safe at the abbey as at any other place: and repeated what Nemours had said, that the king's officers had been unable to trace any part of his route from Paris.

"Besides," resumed Louis, "this abbey is protected by a supernatural power, and none of the country people dare approach it."

"Please you, my young master," said Peter, who was waiting in the room, "we were frightened enough the first night we came here, and I myself, God forgive me! thought the place was inhabited by devils, but they were only owls, and such like, after all."

"Your opinion was not asked," said La Motte, "learn to be silent."

Peter was abashed. When he had quitted the room, La Motte asked his son with seeming carelessness, what were the reports circulated by the country people? "O! Sir," replied Louis, "I cannot recollect half of them. I remember, however, they said that many years ago, a person (but no body had ever seen him, so we may judge how far the report ought to be credited) was privately brought to this abbey, and confined in some part of it, and there were strong reasons to believe he came unfairly to his end."

La Motte sighed. "They farther said," continued Louis, "that the spectre of the deceased had ever since watched nightly among the ruins: and to make the story more wonderful, for the marvellous is the delight of the vulgar, they added, that there was a certain part of the ruin, from whence no person, that had dared to explore it, had ever returned. Thus people, who have few objects of real interest to engage their thoughts, conjure up for themselves imaginary ones."

La Motte sat musing. "And what were the reasons," said he, at length awakening from his reverie, "they pretended to assign, for believing the person confined here was murdered?"

"They did not use a term so positive as that," replied Louis.

"True," said La Motte, recollecting himself, "they only said he came unfairly to his end."

"That is a nice distinction," said Adeline.

"Why, I could not well comprehend what these reasons were," resumed Louis, "the people indeed say that the person, who was brought here, was never known to depart, but I do not find it certain that he ever arrived; that there was strange privacy and mystery observed while he was here, and that the abbey has never since been inhabited by its owner. There seems, however, to be nothing in all this that deserves to be remembered." La Motte raised his head, as if to reply, when the entrance of Madame turned the discourse upon a new subject, and it was not resumed that day.

Peter was now dispatched for provisions, while La Motte and Louis retired to consider how far it was safe for them to continue at the abbey. La Motte, notwithstanding the assurances lately given him, could not but think that Peter's blunders and his son's inquiries might lead to a discovery of his residence. He revolved this in his mind for some time, but at length a thought struck him, that the latter of these circumstances might considerably contribute to his security. "If you," said he to Louis, "return to the inn at Auboine, from whence you were directed here, and without seeming to intend giving intelligence, *do* give the landlord an account of your having found the abbey uninhabited, and then add, that you had discovered the residence of the person you sought in some distant town, it would suppress any reports that may at present exist, and prevent the belief of any in future. And if after all this you can trust yourself for presence of mind and command of countenance, so far as to describe some dreadful apparition, I think these circumstances, together with the distance of the abbey, and intricacies of the forest,

could entitle me to consider this place as my castle."

Louis agreed to all that his father had proposed, and on the following day executed his commission with such success, that the tranquillity of the abbey may be then said to have been entirely restored.

Thus ended this adventure, the only one that had occurred to disturb the family during their residence in the forest. Adeline removed from the apprehension of those evils, with which the late situation of La Motte had threatened her, and from the depression which her interest in his occasioned her, now experienced a more than usual complacency of mind. She thought too that she observed in Madame La Motte a renewal of her former kindness, and this circumstance awakened all her gratitude, and imparted to her a pleasure as lively as it was innocent. The satisfaction with which the presence of her son inspired Madame La Motte, Adeline mistook for kindness to herself, and she exerted her whole attention in an endeavour to become worthy of it.

But the joy which his unexpected arrival had given to La Motte, quickly began to evaporate, and the gloom of despondency again settled on his countenance. He returned frequently to his haunt in the forest—the same mysterious sadness tinctured his manner, and revived the anxiety of Madame La Motte, who was resolved to acquaint her son with this subject of distress, and to solicit his assistance to penetrate its source.

Her jealousy of Adeline, however, she could not communicate, though it again tormented her, and taught her to misconstrue with wonderful ingenuity every look and word of La Motte, and often to mistake the artless expres-

sions of Adeline's gratitude and regard, for those of warmer tenderness. Adeline had formerly accustomed herself to long walks in the forest, and the design Madame had formed of watching her steps, had been frustrated by the late circumstances, and was now entirely overcome by a sense of its difficulty and danger. To employ Peter in the affair, would be to acquaint him with her fears, and to follow her herself, would most probably betray her scheme. by making Adeline aware of her jealousy Being thus restrained by pride and delicacy, she was obliged to endure the pangs of uncertainty concerning the greatest part of her suspicions.

To Louis, however, she related the mysterious change in his father's temper. He listened to her account with very earnest attention, and the surprise and concern impressed upon his countenance spoke how much his heart was interested. He was however involved in equal perplexity with herself upon this subject, and readily undertook to observe the motions of La Motte, believing his interference likely to be of equal service both to his father and his mother. He saw, in some degree, the suspicions of his mother. But as he thought she wished to disguise her feelings, he suffered her to believe that she succeeded.

He now inquired concerning Adeline, and listened to her little history, of which his mother gave a brief relation, with great apparent interest. So much pity did he express for her condition, and so much indignation at the unnatural conduct of her father, that the apprehensions which Madame La Motte began to form, of his having discovered her jealousy, yielded to those of a different kind. She perceived that the beauty of Adeline had already fascinated his imagination, and she feared that

her amiable manners would soon impress his heart. Had her first fondness for Adeline continued, she would still have looked with displeasure upon their attachment, as an obstacle to the promotion and the fortune she hoped to see one day enjoyed by her son.

On these she rested all her future hopes of prosperity, and regarded the matrimonial alliance which he might form, as the only means of extricating his family form their present difficulties. She, therefore, touched lightly upon Adeline's merit, joined coolly with Louis in compassionating her misfortunes, and, with her censure of the father's conduct, mixed an implied suspicion of that of Adeline's. The means she employed to repress the passions of of her son, had a contrary effect. The indifference which she expressed towards Adeline, increased his pity for her destitute condition, and the tenderness, with which she affected to judge the father, heightened his honest indignation at his character.

As he quitted Madame La Motte, he saw his father cross the lawn and enter the deep shade of the forest on the left. He judged this to be a good opportunity of commencing his plan, and quitting the abbey, slowly followed at a distance. La Motte continued to walk straight forward, and seemed so deeply wrapt in thought, that he looked neither to the right or left, and scarcely lifted his head from the ground. Louis had followed him near half a mile, when he saw him suddenly strike into an avenue of the forest, which took a different direction from the way he had hitherto gone. He quickened his steps, that he might not lose sight of him, but, having reached the avenue, found the trees so thickly interwoven, that La Motte was already hid from his view.

He continued, however, to pursue the way

before him: it conducted him through the most gloomy part of the forest he had yet seen, till at length it terminated in an obscure recess, overarched with high trees, whose interwoven branches secluded the direct rays of the sun, and admitted only a sort of solemn twilight. Louis looked around in search of La Motte, but he was no where to be seen. While he stood surveying the place, and considering what farther should be done, he observed, through the gloom, an object at some distance, but the deep shadow that fell around prevented his distinguishing what it was.

In advancing, he perceived the ruins of a small building, which, from the traces that remained, appeared to have been a tomb. As he gazed upon it, "Here," said he, "are probably deposited the ashes of some ancient monk, once an inhabitant of the abbey: perhaps of the founder, who, after having spent a life of abstinence and prayer, sought in heaven the reward of his forbearance upon earth. Peace be to his soul! but did he think a life of mere negative virtue deserved an eternal reward? Mistaken man! reason, had you trusted to its dictates, would have informed you, that the active virtues, the adherence to the golden rule, "Do as you would be done unto," could alone deserve the favour of a Deity whose glory is benevolence."

He remained with his eyes fixed upon the spot, and presently saw a figure arise under the arch of the sepulchre. It started, as if on perceiving him, and immediately disappeared. Louis, though unused to fear, felt at that moment an uneasy sensation, but almost it immediately struck him that this was La Motte himself. He advanced to the ruin, and called him. No answer was returned, and he repeated the call, but all was yet still as the grave.

He then went up to the archway, and endeavoured to examine the place where he had disappeared, but the shadowy obscurity rendered the attempt fruitless. He observed, however, a little to the right, an entrance to the ruin, and advanced some steps down a dark kind of passage, when recollecting that this place might be the haunt of banditti, his danger alarmed him, and he retreated with precipitation.

He walked toward the abbey by the way he came, and finding no person followed him, and believing himself again in safety, his former surmise returned, and he thought is was La Motte he had seen. He mused upon this strange possibility, and endeavoured to assign a reason for so mysterious a conduct, but in vain. Notwithstanding this, his belief of it strengthened, and he entered the abbey under as full a conviction as the circumstances would admit of, that it was his father who had appeared in the sepulchre. On entering what was now used as a parlour, he was much surprised to find him quietly seated there with Madame La Motte and Adeline, and conversing as if he had been returned for some time.

He took the first opportunity of acquainting his mother with his late adventure, and of inquiring how long La Motte had been returned before him, when learning that it was near half an hour, his surprise increased, and he knew not what to conclude.

Meanwhile, a perception of the growing partiality of Louis co-operated with the canker of suspicion, to destroy in Madame La Motte that affection which pity and esteem had formerly excited for Adeline. Her unkindness was now too obvious to escape the notice of her to whom it was directed, and being noticed, it occasioned an anguish, which Adeline found it

very difficult to endure. With the warmth and candour of youth, she sought an explanation of this change of behaviour, and an opportunity of exculpating herself from any intention of provoking it. But this Madame La Motte artfully evaded, while at the same time she threw out hints, that involved Adeline in deeper perplexity, and served to make her present affliction more intolerable.

"I have lost that affection," she would say, "which was my all. It was my only comfort —yet I have lost it—and this without even knowing my offence. But I am thankful I have not merited unkindness, and, though *she* has abandoned *me*, I shall always love *her*."

Thus distressed, she would frequently leave the parlour, and, retiring to her chamber, would yield to a despondency which she had never known till now.

One morning, being unable to sleep, she arose at a very early hour. The faint light of day now trembled through the clouds, and gradually spreading from the horizon, announced the rising sun. Every feature of the landscape was slowly unveiled, moist with the dews of night, and brightening with the dawn, till at length the sun appeared, and shed the full flood of day. The beauty of the hour invited her to walk, and she went forth into the forest to taste the sweets of morning. The carols of new-waked birds saluted her as she passed, and the fresh gale came scented with the breath of flowers, whose tints glowed more vivid through the dew drops that hung on their leaves.

She wandered on without noticing the distance, and following the windings of the river, came to a dewy glade, whose woods, sweeping down to the very edge of the water, formed a scene so sweetly romantic, that she seated herself at the foot of a tree to contemplate it

beauty. These images insensibly soothed her sorrow, and inspired her with that soft and pleasing melancholy, so dear to the feeling mind. For some time she sat lost in a reverie, while the flowers, that grew on the banks beside her, seemed to smile in new life, and drew from her a comparison with her own condition. She mused and sighed, and then in a voice, whose charming melody was modulated by the tenderness of her heart, she sang the following words.

SONNET.

TO THE LILLY.

Soft silken flower! that in the dewy vale
Unfolds thy modest beauties to the morn
And breath'st thy fragrance on her wand'ring gale;
O'er earth's green hills and shadowy valleys borne:

When day has closed his dazzling eye,
And dying gales sink soft away:
When eve steals down the western sky;
And mountains, woods, and vales decay;

Thy tender cups, that graceful swell,
Droop sad beneath her chilly dews;
Thy odours seek their silken cell,
And twilight veils thy languid hues,

But soon, fair flower! the morn shall rise,
And rear again thy pensive head;
Again unveil thy snowy dyes,
Again thy velvet foilage spread.

Sweet child of Spring! like thee, in sorrow's shade,
Full oft I morn in tears, and droop forlorn:
And O! like thine, may light *my* glooms pervade,
And sorrow fly before joy's living morn!

A distant echo lengthened out her tones, and she sat listening to the soft response, till repeating the last stanza of the Sonnet, she was answered by a voice almost as tender, and less distant. She looked round in surprise, and saw

a young man in a hunter's dress, leaning against a tree, and gazing on her with that deep attention, which marks an enraptured mind.

A thousand apprehensions shot athwart her busy thought; and she now first remembered her distance from the abbey. She rose in haste to be gone, when the stranger respectfully advanced; but, observing her timid looks and retiring steps, he paused. She pursued her way towards the abbey; and though many reasons made her anxious to know whether she was followed, delicacy forbade her to look back. When she reached the abbey, finding the family was not yet assembled to breakfast, she retired to her chamber, where her whole thoughts were employed in conjectures concerning the stranger; believing that she was interested on this point no farther than as it concerned the safety of La Motte, she indulged, without scruple, the remembrance of that dignified air and manner which so much distinguished the youth she had seen. After revolving the circumstance more deeply, she believed it impossible that a person of his appearance should be engaged in a stratagem to betray a fellow-creature; and though she was destitute of a single circumstance that might assist her surmises of who he was, or what was his business in an unfrequented forest, she rejected unconsciously every suspicion injurious to his character. Upon farther deliberation, therefore, she resolved not to mention this little circumstance to La Motte; well knowing that, though his danger might be imaginary, his apprehensions would be real, and would renew all the sufferings and perplexity, from which he was but just released. She resolved, however, to refrain, for some time, walking in the forest.

48910

When she come down to breakfast, she observed Madame La Motte to be more than usually reserved. La Motte entered the room soon after her, and made some trifling observations on the weather; and, having endeavoured to support an effort at cheerfulness, sunk into his usual melancholy. Adeline watched the countenance of Madame with anxiety; and when there appeared in it a gleam of kindness, it was as sunshine to her soul; but she very seldom suffered Adeline thus to flatter herself. Her conversation was restrained, and often pointed at something more than could be understood. The entrance of Louis was a very seasonable relief to Adeline, who almost feared to trust her voice with a sentence, lest its trembling accents should betray her uneasiness.

"This charming morning drew you early from your chamber," said Louis, addressing Adeline. "You had no doubt a pleasant companion too," said Madame La Motte, "a solitary walk is seldom agreeable."

"I was alone, Madame." replied Adeline.

"Indeed your own thoughts must be highly pleasing then."

"Alas!" returned Adeline, a tear, spite of her efforts, starting to her eye, "there are now few objects of pleasure left for them."

"That is very surprising," pursued Madame La Motte.

"Is it indeed surprising, Madame, for those who have lost their last friend to be unhappy?"

Madame La Motte's conscience acknowledged the rebuke, and she blushed. "Well," resumed she, after a short pause, "that is not your situation, Adeline;" looking earnestly at La Motte. Adeline, whose innocence protected her from suspicion, did not regard this circumstance; but, smiling through her tears,

said, she rejoiced to hear her say so. During this conversation, La Motte had remained absorbed in his own thoughts; and Louis, unable to guess at what it pointed, looked alternately at his mother and Adeline for an explanation. The latter he regarded with an expression so full of tender compassion, that it revealed to Madame La Motte the sentiments of his soul; and she immediately replied to the last words of Adeline with a very serious air; "A friend is only estimable when our conduct deserves one; the friendship that survives the merit of its object, is a disgrace, instead of an honour, to both parties."

The manner and emphasis with which she delivered these words again alarmed Adeline, who mildly said, "she hoped she should never deserve such censure." Madame was silent; but Adeline was so much shocked by what had already passed, that tears sprung from her eyes, and she hid her face with her handkerchief.

Louis now rose with some emotion; and La Motte, roused from his reverie, inquired what was the matter; but, before he could receive an answer, he seemed to have forgot that he had asked the question. "Adeline may give you her own account," said Madame La Motte. "I have not deserved this," said Adeline, rising, "but since my presence is displeasing, I will retire."

She moved towards the door, when Louis, who was pacing the room in apparent agitation, gently took her hand, saying, "Here is some unhappy mistake," and would have led her to the seat; but her spirits were too much depressed to endure longer restraint; and, withdrawing her hand, "suffer me to go;" said she, "if there is any mistake, I am un-

able to explain it." Saying this, she quitted the room. Louis followed her with his eyes to the door; when, turning to his mother, "Surely, Madam," said he, "you are to blame; my life on it, she deserves your warmest tenderness."

"You are very eloquent in her cause, Sir," said Madame, "may I presume to ask what has interested you thus in her favour?"

"Her own amiable manners," rejoined Louis, "which no one can observe without esteeming them."

"But you may presume too much on your own observations; it is possible these amiable manners may deceive you."

"Your pardon, Madame; I may without presumption affirm they cannot deceive me."

"You have, no doubt, good reasons for this assertion, and I perceive, by your admiration of this artless *innocent*, she has succeeded in her design of entrapping your heart."

"Without designing it, she has won my admiration, which would not have been the case, had she been capable of the conduct you mention."

Madame La Motte was going to reply, but was prevented by her husband, who, again roused from his reverie, inquired into the cause of dispute: "Away with this ridiculous behaviour," said he, in a voice of displeasure. "Adeline has omitted some household duty, I suppose, and an offence so heinous deserves severe punishment no doubt; but let me be no more disturbed with your petty quarrels; if you must be tyrannical, Madame, indulge your humour in private."

Saying this he abruptly quitted the room, and Louis immediately following, Madame was left to her own unpleasant reflections. Her ill

humour proceeded from the usual cause. She had heard of Adeline's walk; and La Motte having gone forth into the forest at an early hour, her imagination, heated by the broodings of jealousy, suggested that they had appointed a meeting. This was confirmed to her by the entrance of Adeline, quickly followed by La Motte; and her perceptions, thus jaundiced by passion, neither the presence of her son, nor her usual attention to good manners, had been able to restrain her emotions. The behaviour of Adeline in the late scene, she considered as a refined piece of art; and the indifference of La Motte as affected. So true it is that

> "Trifles, light as air,
> Are, to the jealous, confirmations strong
> As proofs of Holy Writ."

And so ingenious was she "to twist the true cause the wrong way."

Adeline had retired to her chamber to weep. When her first agitations were subsided, she took an ample view of her conduct; and, perceiving nothing of which she could accuse herself, she became more satisfied, deriving her best comfort from the integrity of her intentions. In the moment of accusation, innocence may sometimes be oppressed with the punishment due only to guilt; but reflection dissolves the illusion of terror, and brings to the aching bosom the consolations of virtue.

When La Motte quitted the room, he had gone into the forest, which Louis observing, he followed and joined him, with an intention of touching upon the subject of his melancholy. "It is a fine morning, Sir," said Louis, "if you will give me leave, I will walk with you." La Motte, though dissatisfied, did not object; and after they had proceeded some

way he changed the course of his walk, striking into a path contrary to that which Louis had observed him take on the foregoing day.

Louis remarked, that the avenue they had quitted was "more shady, and therefore more pleasant." La Motte not seeming to notice this remark, "It leads to a singular spot," continued he, "which I discovered yesterday." La Motte raised his head; Louis proceeded to describe the tomb, and the adventure he had met with: during this relation, La Motte regarded him with attention, while his own countenance suffered various changes. When he had concluded. "You are very daring," said La Motte, "to examine that place, particularly when you ventured down the passage: I would advise you to be more cautious how you penetrate the depths of this forest. I, myself, have not ventured beyond a certain boundary; and am, therefore, uninformed what inhabitants it may harbour. Your account has alarmed me," continued he, "for if banditti are in the neighbourhood, I am not safe from their depredations: 'tis true, I have but little to lose except my life."

"And the lives of your family," rejoined Louis—"Of course," said La Motte.

"It would be well to have more certainty upon that head," rejoined Louis, "I am considering how we may obtain it."

"'Tis useless to consider that," said La Motte, "the inquiry itself brings danger with it; your life, perhaps, would be paid for the indulgence of your curiosity; our only chance of safety is by endeavouring to remain undiscovered. Let us move towards the abbey."

Louis knew not what to think, but said no more upon the subject. La Motte soon after

relasped into a fit of musing; and his son now took occasion to lament that depression of spirits, which he had lately observed in him. "Rather lament the cause of it," said La Motte with a sigh: "That I do, most sincerely, whatever it may be. May I venture to inquire, Sir, what is this cause?"

"Are then my misfortunes so little known to you," rejoined La Motte, "as to make that question necessary? Am I not driven from my home, from my friends, and almost from my country? And shall it be asked why I am afflicted?" Louis felt the justice of this reproof, and was a moment silent. "That you are afflicted, Sir, does not excite my surprise;" resumed he, "it would be indeed strange, were you not."

"What then does excite your surprise?"

"The air of cheerfulness you wore when I first came hither."

"You lately lamented that I was afflicted," said La Motte, "and now seem not very well pleased that I was once cheerful. What is the meaning of this?"

"You much mistake me," said his son, "nothing could give me so much satisfaction as to see that cheerfulness renewed; the same cause of sorrow existed at that time, yet you was then cheerful"

"That I was then cheerful," said La Motte, "you might, without flattery, have attributed to yourself; your presence revived me, and I was relieved at the same time from a load of apprehensions."

"Why, then, as the same cause exists, are you not still cheerful?"

"And why do you not recollect that it is your father you thus speak to?"

"I do, Sir, and nothing but anxiety for my

father could have urged me thus far; it is with inexpressible concern I perceive you have some secret cause of uneasiness; reveal it, Sir, to those who claim a share in all your affliction, and suffer them, by participation, to soften its severity." Louis looked up, and observed the countenace of his father pale as death; his lips trembled while he spoke. "Your penetration, however, you may rely upon it, has in the present instance deceived you; I have no subject of distress, but what you are already acquainted with, and I desire this conversation may never be renewed."

"If it is your desire, of course, I obey," said Louis, "but pardon me, Sir, if"—

"I will not pardon you, Sir," interrupted La Motte, "let the discourse end here." Saying this he quickened his steps, and Louis, not daring to pursue, walked quietly on till he reached the abbey.

Adeline passed the greatest part of the day alone in her chamber, where having examined her conduct, she endeavoured to fortify her heart aginst the unmerited displeasure of Madame La Motte. This was a task more difficult than that of self-acquaintance. She loved her, and had relied on her friendship, which, notwithstanding the conduct of Madame, still appeared valuable to her. It was true, she had not deserved to lose it, but Madame was so averse to explanation, that there was little probability of recovering it, however ill-founded might be the cause of her dislike. At length she reasoned, or rather, perhaps, persuaded herself into tolerable composure; for to resign a real good with contentment, is less an effort of reason than of temper.

For many hours she busied herself upon a piece of work, which she had undertaken for

Madame La Motte; and this she did, without the least intention of conciliating her favour, but because she felt there was something in thus repaying unkindness, which was suitable to her own temper, her sentiments, and her pride. Self-love *may* be the centre, round which the human affections move, for whatever motive conduces to self-gratification, may be resolved into self-love; yet, some of these affections are in their nature so refined, that though we cannot deny their origin, they almost deserve the name of virtue. Of this species was that of Adeline.

In this employment, and in reading, Adeline passed as much of the day as possible. From books, indeed, she had constantly derived her chief information and amusement: those belonging to La Motte were few, but well chosen; and Adeline could find pleasure in reading them more than once. When her mind was discomposed by the behaviour of Madame La Motte, or by a retrospection of her early misfortunes, a book was the opiate that lulled it to repose. La Motte had several of the best English poets, a language which Adeline had learned in the convent; their beauties, therefore, she was capable of tasting, and they often inspired her with enthusiastic delight.

At the decline of day, she quitted her chamber to enjoy the sweet evening hour, but strayed no farther than an avenue near the abbey, which fronted the west. She read a little, but finding it impossible any longer to abstract her attention from the scene around, she closed the book, and yielded to the sweet complacent melancholy which the hour inspired. The air was still, the sun, sinking below the distant hill, spread a purple glow over the landscape, and touched the forest glades with

softer light. A dewy freshness was diffused upon the air. As the sun descended, the dusk came silently on, and the scene assumed a solemn grandeur. As she mused, she recollected and repeated the following stanzas.

NIGHT.

Now ev'ning fades, her pensive step retires,
And night leads on the dews, and shadowy hours:
Her awful pomp of planetary fires,
And all her train of visionary powers.

These paint with fleeting shapes the dreams of sleep,
These swell the waking soul with pleasing dread:
These through the glooms in forms terrific sweep,
And rouse the thrilling horrors of the dead!

Queen of the solemn thought—mysterious night!
Whose step is darkness, and whose voice is fear!
Thy shades I welcome with severe delight,
And hail thy hollow gales, that sigh so drear!

When wrapt in clouds, and riding in the blast,
Thou roll'st the storm along the sounding shore,
I love to watch the whelming billows cast
On rocks below, and listen to the roar.

Thy milder terrors, Night, I frequent woo,
Thy silent lightnings, and thy meteor's glare,
Thy northern fires, bright with ensanguined hue,
That light in heaven's high vault the fervid air.

But chief I love thee, when thy lucid car
Sheds through the fleecy clouds a trembling gleam,
And shows the misty mountains from afar,
The nearer forest, and the valley's stream:

And nameless objects in the vale below,
That floating dimly to the musing eye,
Assume, at fancy's touch, fantastic show,
And raise her sweet romantic visions high.

Then let me stand amidst thy glooms profound
On some wild woody steep, and hear the breeze
That swells in mournful melody around,
And faintly dies upon the distant trees.

What melancholy charms steal o'er the mind!
What hallowed tears the rising rapture greet!
While many a viewless spirit in the wind,
Sighs to the lonely hours in accents sweet!

Ah! who the dear illusions pleased would yield,
Which fancy wakes from silence and from shades,
For all the sober forms of truth revealed,
For all the scenes that Day's bright eye pervades!

On her return to the abbey she was joined by Louis, who, after some conversation, said, "I am much grieved by the scene to which I was witness this morning, and have longed for an opportunity of telling you so. My mother's behaviour is too mysterious to be accounted for, but it is not difficult to perceive she labours under some mistake. What I have to request is, that whenever I can be of service to you, you will command me."

Adeline thanked him for his friendly offer, which she felt more sensibly than she chose to express. "I am unconscious," said she, "of any offence that may have deserved Madame La Motte's displeasure, and am therefore totally unable to account for it. I have repeatedly sought an explanation, which she has as anxiously avoided; it is better, therefore, to press the subject no farther. At the same time, Sir, suffer me to assure you, I have a just sense of your goodness." Louis sighed, and was silent. At length, "I wish you would permit me," resumed he, "to speak with my mother upon this subject. I am sure I could convince her of her error."

"By no means," replied Adeline, "Madame La Motte's displeasure has given me inexpressible concern; but to compel her to an explanation would only increase this displeasure, instead of removing it. Let me beg of you not to attempt it."

"I submit to your judgment," said Louis, "but, for once, it is with reluctance. I should esteem myself most happy, if I could be of service to you." He spoke this with an accent so tender, that Adeline, for the first time, perceived the sentiments of his heart. A mind more fraught with vanity than hers would have taught her long ago to regard the attentions of Louis, as the result of something more than well-bred gallantry. She did not appear to notice his last words, but remained silent, and involuntarily quickened her pace. Louis said no more, but seemed sunk in thought; and this silence remained uninterrupted, till they entered the abbey.

CHAPTER VI.

"Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal Mockery, hence!"

Macbeth.

NEAR a month elapsed without any remarkable occurrence: the melancholy of La Motte suffered little abatement; and the behaviour of Madame to Adeline, though somewhat softened, was still far from kind. Louis, by numberless little attentions, testified his growing affection for Adeline, who continued to treat them as passing civilities.

It happened, one stormy night, as they were preparing for rest, that they were alarmed by a trampling of horses near the abbey. The sound of several voices succeeded, and a loud knocking at the great gate of the hall soon after confirmed the alarm. La Motte had little doubt that the officers of Justice had at length discovered his retreat, and the perturbation of

fear almost confounded his senses; he, however, ordered the lights to be extinguished, and a profound silence to be observed, unwilling to neglect even the slightest possiblity of security. There was a chance, he thought, that the persons might suppose the place uninhabited, and believe they had mistaken the object of their search. His orders were scarcely obeyed when the knocking was renewed, and with increased violence. La Motte now repaired to a small grated window in the portal of the gate, that he might observe the number and appearance of the strangers.

The darkness of the night baffled his purpose; he could only perceive a group of men on horseback; but, listening attentively, he distinguished a part of their discourse. Several of the men contended, that they had mistaken the place; till a person, who from his authoritative voice appeared to be their leader, affirmed that the lights had issued from this spot, and he was positive there were persons within. Having said this, he again knocked loudly at the gate, and was answered only by hollow echoes. La Motte's heart trembled at the sound, and he was unable to move.

After waiting some time, the strangers seemed as if in consultation, but their discourse was conducted in such a low tone of voice, that La Motte was unable to distinguish its purport. They withdrew from the gate, as if to depart, but he presently thought he heard them amongst the trees on the other side of the fabric, and soon became convinced they had not left the abbey. A few minutes held La Motte in a state of torturing suspense; he quitted the grate, where Louis now stationed himself, for that part of the edifice which overlooked the spot where he supposed them to be waiting.

The storm was now loud, and the hollow blasts, which rushed among the trees, prevented his distinguishing any other sound. Once in the pauses of the wind, he thought he heard distinct voices; but he was not long left to conjecture, for the renewed knocking at the gate again appalled him; and, regardless of the terrors of Madame La Motte and Adeline, he ran to try his last chance of concealment, by means of the trapdoor.

Soon after, the violence of the assailants seemed to increase with every gust of the tempest; the gate, which was old and decayed, burst from its hinges, and admitted them to the hall. At the moment of their entrance, a scream from Madame La Motte, who stood at the door of an adjoining apartment, confirmed the suspicions of the principal stranger, who continued to advance as fast as the darkness would permit him.

Adeline had fainted, and Madame La Motte was calling loudly for assistance, when Peter entered with lights, and discovered the hall filled with men, and his young mistress senseless upon the floor. A chevalier now advanced, and soliciting pardon of Madame for the rudeness of his conduct, was attempting an apology, when, perceiving Adeline, he hastened to raise her from the ground, but Louis, who now returned, caught her in his arms, and desired the stranger not to interfere.

The person, to whom he spoke this, wore the star of one of the first orders in France, and had an air of dignity, which declared him to be of superior rank. He appeared to be about forty, but perhaps the spirit and fire of his countenance made the impression of time upon his features less perceptible. His softened aspect and insinuating manners, while regard-

less of himself he seemed attentive only to the condition of Adeline, gradually dissipated the apprehensions of Madame La Motte, and subdued the sudden resentment of Louis. Upon Adeline, who was yet insensible, he gazed with an eager admiration, which seemed to absorb all the faculties of his mind. She was, indeed, an object not to be contemplated with indifference.

Her beauty, touched with the languid delicacy of illness, gained from sentiment what it lost in bloom. The negligence of her dress, loosened for the purpose of freer respiration, discovered those glowing charms, which her auburn tresses, that fell in profusion over her bosom shaded, but could not conceal.

There now entered another stranger, a young chevalier, who, having spoken hastily to the elder, joined the general group that surrounded Adeline. He was of a person, in which elegance was happily blended with strength, and had a countenance animated, but not haughty; noble, yet ex pressive of peculiar sweetness. What rendered it at present more interesting, was the compassion he seemed to feel for Adeline, who now revived, and saw him, the first objec that met her eyes, bending over her in silent anxiety.

On perceiving him, a blush of quick surprise passed over her cheek, for she knew him to be the stranger she had seen in the forest. Her countenance instantly changed to the paleness of terror, when she observed the room crowded with people. Louis now supported her into another apartment, where the two chevaliers, who followed her, again apoligized for the alarm they had occasioned. The elder, turning to Madame La Motte, said, "You are, no doubt, Madame, ignorant that I am the

proprietor of this abbey." She started: "Be not alarmed, Madame, you are safe and welcome. This ruinous spot has been long abandoned by me, and if it has afforded you a shelter I am happy."

Madame La Motte expressed her gratitude for this condescension, and Louis declared his sense of the politeness of the Marquis de Montalt, for that was the name of the noble stranger.

"My chief residence," said the Marquis, "is in a distant province, but I have a chateau near the borders of the forest, and in returning from an excursion I have been benighted and lost my way. A light which gleamed through the trees, attracted me hither, and such was the darkness without, that I did not know it proceeded from the abbey till I came to the door." The noble deportment of the strangers, the splendour of their apparel, and above all this speech, dissipated every remaining doubt of Madame's, and she was giving orders for refreshments to be set before them, when La Motte, who had listened, and was now convinced he had nothing to fear, entered the apartment.

He advanced towards the Marquis with a complacent air, but as he would have spoken, the words of welcome faltered on his lips, his limbs trembled, and a ghastly paleness overspread his countenance. The Marquis was little less agitated, and, in the first moment of surprise, put his hand upon his sword, but, recollecting himself, he withdrew it, and endeavoured to obtain a command of features. A pause of agonizing silence ensued. La Motte made some motion towards the door, but his agitated frame refused to support him, and he sunk into a chair, silent and exhausted. The

horror of his countenance, together with his whole behaviour, excited the utmost surprise in Madame, whose eyes inquired of the Marquis more than he thought proper to answer; his looks increased, instead of explaining the mystery, and expressed a mixture of emotions, which she could not analyze. Meanwhile, she endeavoured to soothe and revive her husband, but he repressed her efforts, and averting his face, covered it with his hands.

The Marquis, seeming to recover his presence of mind, stepped to the door of the hall where his people were assembled, when La Motte, starting from his seat, with a frantic air, called on him to return. The Marquis looked back and stopped, but still hesitating whether to proceed; the supplications of Adeline, who was now returned, added to those of La Motte, determined him, and he sat down. "I request of you, my Lord," said La Motte, "that we may converse for a few moments by ourselves."

"The request is bold, and the indulgence, perhaps, dangerous," said the Marquis: "it is more also than I will grant. You can have nothing to say, with which your family are not acquainted——speak your purpose and be brief." La Motte's complexion varied to every sentence of this speech. "Impossible, my Lord," said he; "my lips shall close for ever, ere they pronounce before another human being the words reserved for you alone. I entreat——I supplicate of you a few moments' private discourse." As he pronounced these words, tears swelled in his eyes, and the Marquis, softened by his distress, consented, though with evident emotion and reluctance, to his request.

La Motte took a light, and led the Marquis

to a small room in a remote part of the edifice, where they remained near an hour. Madame, alarmed by the length of their absence, went in quest of them: as she drew near, a curiosity, in such circumstances perhaps not unjustifiable, prompted her to listen. La Motte just then exclaimed—"The phrenzy of despair!"—some words followed, delivered in a low tone, which she could not understand—"I have suffered more than I can express," continued he; "the same image has pursued me in my midnight dream, and in my daily wanderings. There is no punishment short of death, which I would not have endured, to regain the state of mind with which I entered this forest. I again address myself to your compassion."

A loud gust of wind, that burst along the passage where Madame La Motte stood, overpowered his voice and that of the Marquis, who spoke in reply: but she soon after distinguished these words—"To-morrow, my Lord, if you return to these ruins, I will lead you to the spot."

"That is scarcely necessary, and may be dangerous." said the Marquis. "From you, my Lord, I can excuse these doubts," resumed La Motte; "but I will swear whatever you shall propose. Yes," continued he, "whatever may be the consequence, I will swear to submit to your decree!" The rising tempest again drowned the sound of their voices, and Madame La Motte vainly endeavoured to hear those words, upon which, probably, hung the explanation of this mysterious conduct. They now moved towards the door, and she retreated with precipitation to the apartment where she had left Adeline, with Louis and the young chevalier.

Hither the Marquis and La Motte soon fol-

lowed, the first haughty and cool, the latter somewhat more composed than before, though the impression of horror was not yet faded from his countenance. The Marquis passed on to the hall, where his retinue awaited; the storm was not yet subsided, but he seemed impatient to be gone, and ordered his people to be in readiness. La Motte observed a sullen silence, frequently pacing the room with hasty steps, and sometimes lost in reverie. Meanwhile, the Marquis, seating himself by Adeline, directed to her his whole attention, except when sudden fits of absence came over his mind, and suspended him in silence: at these times the young chevalier addressed Adeline, who, with diffidence and some agitation, shrunk from the observance of both.

The Marquis had been near two hours at the abbey, and the tempest still continuing, Madame La Motte offered him a bed. A look from her husband made her tremble for the consequence. Her offer was, however, politely declined, the Marquis being evidently as impatient to be gone, as his tenant appeared distressed by his presence: he often returned to the hall, and from the gates raised a look of impatience to the clouds. Nothing was to be seen through the darkness of night—nothing heard but the howlings of the storm.

The morning dawned before he departed. As he was preparing to leave the abbey, La Motte again drew him aside, and held him for a few moments in close conversation. His impassioned gestures, which Madame La Motte observed from a remote part of the room, added to her curiosity a degree of wild apprehension, derived from the obscurity of the subject. Her endeavour to distinguish the corresponding words, was baffled by the low voice in which they were uttered.

The Marquis and his retinue at length departed, and La Motte, having himself fastened the gates, silently and dejectedly withdrew to his chamber. The moment they were alone Madame seized the opportunity of entreating her husband to explain the scene she had witnessed. "Ask me no questions," said La Motte sternly, "for I will answer none. I have already forbade you speaking to me on this subject."

"What subject?" said his wife. La Motte seemed to recollect himself—"No matter—I was mistaken—I thought you had repeated these questions before."

"Ah!" said Madame La Motte, "it is then as I suspected; your former melancholy, and the distress of this night, have the same cause."

"And why should you either suspect or inquire? am I always to be persecuted with conjectures?"

"Pardon me, I meant not to persecute you; but my anxiety for your welfare will not suffer me to rest under this dreadful uncertainty. Let me claim the privilege of a wife, and share the affliction which oppresses you. Deny me not." La Motte interrupted her. "Whatever may be the cause of the emotions which you have witnessed, I swear that I will not reveal it. A time may come, when I shall no longer judge concealment necessary; till then be silent, and desist from importunity; above all, forbear to remark to any one what you may have seen uncommon in me. Bury your surmise in your own bosom, as you would avoid my curse and my destruction." The determined air with which he spoke this, while his countenance was overspread with a livid hue, made his wife shudder; and she forbore all reply.

Madame La Motte retired to bed, but not

to rest. She ruminated on the past occurrence; and her surprise and curiosity, concerning the words and behaviour of her husband, were but more strongly stimulated by reflection. One truth, however, appeared; she could not doubt but the mysterious conduct of La Motte, which had for so many months oppressed her with anxiety, and the late scene with the Marquis, originated from the same cause. This belief, which seemed to prove how unjustly she had suspected Adeline, brought with it a pang of self-accusation. She looked forward to the morrow, which would lead the Marquis again to the abbey, with impatience. Wearied nature at length resumed her rights, and yielded a short oblivion of care.

At a late hour, the next day, the family assembled to breakfast. Each individual of the party appeared silent and abstracted, but very different was the aspect of their features, and still more the complexion of their thoughts. La Motte seemed agitated by impatient fear, yet the sullenness of despair overspread his countenance. A certain wildness in his eyes at times expressed the sudden start of horror, and again his features would sink into the gloom of despondency.

Madame La Motte seemed harassed with anxiety; she watched every turn of her husband's countenance, and impatiently waited the arrival of the Marquis. Louis was composed and thoughtful. Adeline seemed to feel her full share of uneasiness. She had observed the behaviour of La Motte the preceding night with much surprise, and the happy confidence she had hitherto reposed in him was shaken. She feared also, lest the exigency of his circumstances should precipitate him again into the world, and that he would be either un-

able or unwilling to afford her a shelter beneath his roof.

During breakfast La Motte frequently rose to the window, from whence he cast many an anxious look. His wife understood too well the cause of his impatience, and endeavoured to repress her own. In these intervals, Louis attempted by whispers to obtain some information from his father, but La Motte always returned to the table, where the presence of Adeline prevented farther discourse.

After breakfast, as he walked upon the lawn, Louis would have joined him, but La Motte peremptorily declared he intended to be alone, and soon after, the marquis having not yet arrived, proceeded to a greater distance from the abbey.

Adeline returned to her usual working room with Madame La Motte, who affected an air of cheerfulness, and even of kindness. Feeling the necessity of offering some reason for the striking agitation of La Motte, and of preventing the surprise which the unexpected appearance of the Marquis would occasion Adeline, if she was left to connect it with his behaviour of the preceding night, she mentioned that the Marquis and La Motte had long been known to each other, and that this unexpected meeting, after an absence of many years, and under circumstances so altered and humiliating, on the part of the latter, had occasioned him much painful emotion. This had been heightened by a consciousness that the Marquis had formerly misinterpreted some circumstances in his conduct towards him, which had caused a suspension of their intimacy.

This account did not bring conviction to the mind of Adeline, for it seemed inadequate to

the degree of emotion the Marquis and La Motte had mutually betrayed. Her surprise was excited, and her curiosity awakened by the words which were meant to delude them both. But she forbore to express her thoughts.

Madame, proceeding with her plan, said, "The Marquis was now expected, and she hoped whatever differences remained, would be perfectly adjusted." Adeline blushed, and, endeavouring to reply, her lips faltered. Conscious of this agitation, and of the observance of Madame La Motte, her confusion increased, and her endeavours to suppress served only to heighten it. She tried to renew the discourse, and still she found it immposible to collect her thoughts. Shocked lest Madame should apprehend the sentiment which had till this moment been concealed almost from herself, her colour fled, she fixed her eyes on the ground, and for some time found it difficult to respire. Madame La Motte inquired if she was ill, when Adeline, glad of the excuse, withdrew to the indulgence of her own thoughts, which were now wholly engrossed by the expectation of seeing again the young chevalier who had accompanied the Marquis.

As she looked from her room, she saw the Marquis on horseback, with several attendants, advancing at a distance and she hastened to apprize Madame La Motte of his approach. In a short time he arrived at the gates, and Madame and Louis went out to receive him, La Motte being not yet returned. He entered the hall, followed by the young chevalier, and accosting Madame with a sort of stately politeness, inquired for La Motte, whom Louis now went to seek.

The Marquis remained for a few minutes silent, and then asked of Madame La Motte

"how her fair daughter did?" Madame understood it was Adeline he meant, and having answered his inquiry, and slightly said she was not related to them. Adeline, upon some indication of the Marquis's wish, was sent for. She entered the room with a modest blush and a timid air, which seemed to engage all his attention. His compliments she received with a sweet grace, but, when the young chevalier approached, the warmth of his manner rendered her involuntarily more reserved, and she scarcely dared to raise her eyes from the ground, lest they should encounter his.

La Motte now entered, and apologized for his absence, which the Marquis noticed only by a slight inclination of his head, expressing at the same time by his looks, both distrust and pride. They immediately quitted the abbey together, and the marquis beckoned his attendants to follow at a distance. La Motte forbade his son to accompany him, but Louis observed he took the way into the thickest part of the forest. He was lost in a chaos of conjecture concerning this affair, but curiosity and anxiety for his father induced him to follow at some distance.

In the meantime, the young stranger, whom the Marquis addressed by the name of Theodore, remained at the abbey with Madame La Motte and Adeline The former with all her address could scarcely conceal her agitation during this interval. She moved involuntarily to the door, whenever she heard a footstep, and several times she went to the hall door, in order to look into the forest, but as often returned, checked by disappointment. No person appeared. Theodore seemed to address as much of his attention to Adeline, as politeness would allow him to withdraw from Ma-

dame La Motte. His manners, so gentle, yet dignified, insensibly subdued her timidity, and banished her reserve. Her conversation no longer suffered a painful constraint, but gradually disclosed the beauties of her mind, and seemed to produce a mutual confidence. A similarity of sentiment soon appeared, and Theodore, by the impatient pleasure which animated his countenance, seemed frequently to anticipate the thoughts of Adeline.

To them the absence of the Marquis was short, though long to Madame La Motte, whose countenance brightened, when she heard the trampling of horses at the gate.

The Marquis appeared but for a moment, and passed on with La Motte to a private room, where they remained for some time in conference, immediately after which he departed. Theodore took leave of Adeline, who, as well as La Motte and Madame, attended them to the gates, with an expression of tender regret, and often, as he went, looked back upon the abbey, till the intervening branches entirely excluded it from his view.

The transient glow of pleasure diffused over the cheek of Adeline disappeared with the young stranger, and she sighed as she turned into the hall. The image of Theodore pursued her to her chamber; she recollected with exactness every particular of his late conversation—his sentiments so congenial with her own—his manners so engaging—his countenance so animated—so ingenuous and so noble, in which manly dignity was blended with the sweetness of benevolence—these and every other grace she recollected, and a soft melancholy stole upon her heart. "I shall see him no more," said she. A sigh that followed, told her more of her heart than she wished to know.

She blushed, and sighed again, and then suddenly recollecting herself, she endeavoured to divert her thoughts to a different subject. La Motte's connexion with the Marquis for some time engaged her attention, but, unable to develope the mystery that attended it, she sought a refuge from her own reflections in the more pleasing ones to be derived from books.

During this time, Louis, shocked and surprised at the extreme distress which his father had manifested upon the first appearance of the Marquis, addressed him upon the subject. He had no doubt that the Marquis was intimately concerned in the event which made it necessary for La Motte to leave Paris, and he spoke his thoughts without disguise, lamenting at the same time the unlucky chance, which had brought him to seek refuge in a place, of all others the least capable of affording it—the estate of his enemy. La Motte did not contradict this opinion of his son's, and joined in lamenting the evil fate which had conducted him thither.

The term of Louis' absence from his regiment was now nearly expired, and he took occasion to express his sorrow, that he must soon be obliged to leave his father in circumstances so dangerous as the present. "I should leave you, Sir, with less pain," continued he, "were I sure I knew the full extent of your misfortunes. At present I am left to conjecture evils, which perhaps do not exist. Relieve me, Sir, from this state of painful uncertainty, and suffer me to prove myself worthy of your confidence."

"I have already answered you on this subject," said La Motte, "and forbade you to renew it. I am now obliged to tell you, I care not how soon you depart, if I am to be subject-

ed to these inquiries." La Motte walked abruptly away, and left his son to doubt and concern.

The arrival of the Marquis had dissipated the jealous fears of Madame La Motte, and she awoke to a sense of her cruelty towards Adeline. When she considered her orphan state —the uniform affection which had appeared in her behaviour—the mildness and patience with which she had borne her injurious treatment, she was shocked, and took an early opportunity of renewing her former kindness. But she could not explain this seeming inconsistency of conduct without betraying her late suspicions, which she now blushed to remember, nor could she apologize for her former behaviour without giving this explanation.

She contented herself, therefore, with expressing in her manner the regard which was thus revived. Adeline was at first surprised, but she felt too much pleasure at the change to be scrupulous in inquiring its cause.

But notwithstanding the satisfaction which Adeline received from the revival of Madame La Motte's kindness, her thoughts frequently recurred to the peculiar and forlorn circumstances of her condition. She could not help feeling less confidence than she had formerly done in the friendship of Madame La Motte, whose character now appeared less amiable than her imagination had represented it, and seemed strongly tinctured with caprice. Her thoughts often dwelt upon the strange introduction of the Marquis at the abbey, and on the mutual emotions and apparent dislike of La Motte and himself; and, under these circumstances, it equally excited her surprise that La Motte should choose, and that the Marquis should permit him, to remain in his territory.

Her mind returned the oftener, perhaps, on this subject, because it was connected with Theodore; but it returned unconscious of the idea which attracted it. She attributed the interest she felt in the affair, to her anxiety for the welfare of La Motte, and for her own future destination, which was now so deeply involved in his. Sometimes, indeed, she caught herself busy in conjecture as to the degree of relationship in which Theodore stood to the Marquis, but she immediately checked her thoughts, and severely blamed herself for having suffered them to stray to an object, which she perceived was too dangerous to her peace.

CHAPTER VII.

"Present ills
Are less than horrible imaginings."

A FEW days after the occurrence related in the preceding chapter, as Adeline was alone in her chamber, she was roused from a reverie by a trampling of horses near the gate, and on looking from the casement, she saw the Marquis de Montalt enter the abbey. This circumstance surprised her, and an emotion, whose cause she did not trouble herself to inquire for, made her instantly retreat from the window. The same cause, however, led her thither again as hastily, but the object of her search did not appear, and she was in no haste to retire.

As she stood musing and disappointed, the Marquis came out with La Motte, and immediately looking up, saw Adeline, and bowed. She returned his compliment respectfully, and

withdrew from the window, vexed at having been seen there. They went into the forest, but the Marquis's attendants did not, as before, follow them thither. When they returned, which was not till after a considerable time, the Marquis immediately mounted his horse, and rode away.

For the remainder of the day, La Motte appeared gloomy and silent, and was frequently lost in thought. Adeline observed him with particular attention and concern; she perceived that he was always more melancholy after an interview with the Marquis, and was now surprised to hear that the latter had appointed to dine the next day at the abbey.

When La Motte mentioned this, he added some high eulogiums on the character of the Marquis, and particularly praised his generosity and nobleness of soul. At this instant Adeline recollected the anecdotes she had formerly heard concerning the abbey, and they threw a shadow over the brightness of that excellence, which La Motte now celebrated. The account, however, did not appear to deserve much credit; a part of it, as far as a negative will admit of demonstration, having been already proved false; for it had been reported that the abbey was haunted, and no supernatural appearance had ever been observed by the present inhabitants.

Adeline, however, ventured to inquire whether it was the present Marquis of whom those injurious reports had been raised? La Motte answered her with a smile of ridicule; "Stories of ghosts and hobgoblins have always been admired and cherished by the vulgar," said he. "I am inclined to rely upon my own experience, at least as much as upon the accounts of these peasants: if you have seen any thing

to corroborate these accounts, pray inform me of it, that I may establish my faith."

"You mistake me, Sir," said she, "it was not concerning supernatural agency that I would inquire: I alluded to a different part of the report, which hinted, that some person had been confined here, by order of the Marquis, who was said to have died unfairly. This was alleged as a reason for the Marquis's having abandoned the abbey."

"All the mere coinage of idleness," said La Motte; "a romance tale to excite wonder: to see the Marquis is alone sufficient to refute this; and if we credit half the number of those stories that spring from the same source, we prove ourselves little superior to the simpletons who invent them. Your good sense, Adeline, I think, will teach you the merit of disbelief."

Adeline blushed, and was silent; but La Motte's defence of the Marquis appeared much warmer and more diffuse than was consistent with his own disposition, or required by the occasion. His former conversation with Louis occurred to her, and she was the more surprised at what passed at present.

She looked forward to the morrow with a mixture of pain and pleasure; the expectation of seeing again the young chevalier occupying her thoughts, and agitating them with various emotions: now she feared his presence, and now she doubted whether he would come. At length she observed this, and blushed to find how much he engaged her attention. The morrow arrived—the Marquis came—but he came alone; and the sunshine of Adeline's mind was clouded, though she was able to wear her usual air of cheerfulness. The Marquis was polite, affable, and attentive: to manners

the most easy and elegant, was added the last refinement of polished life. His conversation was lively, amusing, sometimes even witty; and discovered great knowledge of the world; or, what is often mistaken for it, an acquaintance with the higher circles, and with the topics of the day.

Here La Motte was also qualified to converse with him, and they entered into a discussion of the characters and manners of the age with great spirit and some humour. Madame La Motte had not seen her husband so cheerful since they left Paris, and sometimes she could almost fancy she was there. Adeline listened, till the cheerfulness which she had first only assumed, became real. The address of the Marquis was so insinuating and affable, that her reserve insensibly gave way before it, and her natural vivacity resumed its long lost empire.

At parting, the Marquis told La Motte he rejoiced at having found so agreeable a neighbour. La Motte bowed. "I shall sometimes visit you," continued he, "and I lament that I cannot at present invite Madame La Motte, and her fair friend, to my chateau, but it is undergoing some repairs, which make it but an uncomfortable residence."

The vivacity of La Motte disappeared with his guest, and he soon relapsed into fits of silence and abstraction. "The Marquis is a very agreeable man," said Madame. "Very agreeable," replied he. "And seems to have an excellent heart," she resumed. "An excellent one," said La Motte.

"You seem discomposed, my dear; what has disturbed you."

"Not in the least—I was only thinking that, with such agreeable talents, and such an ex-

cellent heart, it was a pity the Marquis should—

"What? my dear," said Madame with impatience: "That the Marquis should—should suffer this abbey to fall into ruins," replied La Motte.

"Is that all?" said Madame with disappointment—"That is all, upon my honour," said La Motte, and left the room.

Adeline's spirits, no longer supported by the animated conversation of the Marquis, sunk into languor, and when he departed, she walked pensively into the forest. She followed a little romantic path that wound along the margin of the stream, and was overhung with deep shades. The tranquillity of the scene, which autumn now touched with her sweetest tints, softened her mind to a tender kind of melancholy, and she suffered a tear, which she knew not wherefore had stolen into her eye, to tremble there unchecked. She came to a little lonely recess, formed by high trees; the wind sighed mournfully among the branches, and as it waved their lofty heads, scattered their leaves to the ground. She seated herself on a bank beneath, and indulged the melancholy reflections that pressed on her mind.

"O! could I dive into futurity, and behold the events which await me!" said she; "I should, perhaps, by constant contemplation, be enabled to meet them with fortitude. An orphan in this wide world—thrown upon the friendship of strangers for comfort, and upon their bounty for the very means of existence, what but evil have I to expect! Alas, my father! how could you thus abandon your child—how leave her to the storms of life—to sink, perhaps, beneath them? Alas, I have no friend!"

She was interrupted by a rustling among the

fallen leaves; she turned her head, and perceiving the Marquis's young friend, arose to depart. "Pardon this intrusion," said he, "your voice attracted me hither, and your words detained me; my offence, however, brings with it its own punishment, having learned your sorrows—how can I help feeling them myself? would that my sympathy, or my suffering, could rescue you from them!" He hesitated—"Would that I could deserve the title of your friend, and be thought worthy of it by yourself!"

The confusion of Adeline's thoughts could scarcely permit her to reply; she trembled, and gently withdrew her hand, which he had taken while he spoke. "You have perhaps heard, Sir, more than is true; I am, indeed, not happy, but a moment of dejection has made me unjust, and I am less unfortunate than I have represented. When I said I had no friend, I was ungrateful to the kindness of Monsieur and Madame La Motte, who have been more than friends—have been as parents to me."

"If so, I honour them," cried Theodore, with warmth; "and if I did not feel it to be presumption, I would ask why you are unhappy? But"—he paused. Adeline, raising her eyes, saw him gazing upon her with intense and eager anxiety, and her looks were again fixed upon the ground. "I have pained you," said Theodore, "by an improper request. Can you forgive me, and also when I add, that it was an interest in your welfare, which urged my inquiry?"

"Forgiveness, Sir, it is unnecessary to ask. I am certainly obliged by the compassion you express. But the evening is cold, if you please, we will walk towards the abbey." As they

moved on, Theodore was for some time silent. At length, "It was but lately that I solicited your pardon," said he, "and I shall now, perhaps, have need of it again; but you will do me the justice to believe, that I have a strong, and, indeed, a pressing reason to inquire how nearly you are related to Monsieur La Motte."

"We are not at all related," said Adeline; "but the service he has done me I can never repay, and I hope my gratitude will teach me never to forget it."

"Indeed!" said Theodore, surprised: "and may I ask how long you have known him?"

"Rather, Sir, let me ask why these questions are necessary?"

"You are just," said he, with an air of self-condemnation, "my conduct has deserved this reproof; I should have been more explicit." He looked as if his mind was labouring with something which he was unwilling to express. "But you know not how delicately I am circumstanced," continued he, "yet I will aver, that my questions are prompted by the tenderest interest in your happiness—and even by my fears for your safety." Adeline started: "I fear you are deceived," said he, "I fear there's danger near you."

Adeline stopped, and looking earnestly at him, begged he would explain himself. She suspected that some mischief threatened La Motte; and Theodore continuing silent, she repeated her request. "If La Motte is concerned in this danger," said she, "let me entreat you to acquaint him with it immediately. He has but too many misfortunes to apprehend."

"Excellent Adeline!" cried Theodore, "that heart must be adamant that would injure you. How shall I hint what I fear is too true, and how forbear to warn you of your danger

without"—He was interrupted by a step among the trees, and presently after saw La Motte cross into the path they were in. Adeline felt confused at being thus seen with the chevalier, and was hastening to join La Motte, but Theodore detained her, and entreated a moment's attention. "There is now no time to explain myself," said he "yet what I would say is of the utmost consequence to *yourself*."

"Promise, therefore, to meet me in some part of the forest at about this time to-morrow evening, you will then, I hope, be convinced that my conduct is directed, neither by common circumstances, nor common regard." Adeline shuddered at the idea of making an appointment; she hesitated, and at length entreated Theodore not to delay till to-morrow an explanation which appeared to be so important, but to follow La Motte, and inform him of his danger immediately. "It is not with La Motte I would speak," replied Theodore; "I know of no danger that threatens him; but he approaches, be quick, lovely Adeline, and promise to meet me."

"I do promise," said Adeline, with a faltering voice; "I will come to the spot where you found me this evening, an hour earlier to-morrow." Saying this, she withdrew her trembling hand, which Theodore had pressed to his lips in token of acknowledgement, and he immediately disappeared.

La Motte now approached Adeline, who, fearing that he had seen Theodore, was in some confusion. "Whither is Louis gone so fast?" said La Motte. She rejoiced to find his mistake, and suffered him to remain in it. They walked pensively towards the abbey, where Adeline, too much occupied by her own thoughts to bear company, retired to her cham-

ber. She ruminated upon the words of Theodore, and the more she considered them, the more she was perplexed. Sometimes she blamed herself for having made an appointment, doubting whether he had not solicited it for the purpose of pleading a passion; and now delicacy checked this thought, and made her vexed that she had presumed upon having inspired one. She recollected the serious earnestness of his voice and manner, when he entreated her to meet him; and as they convinced her of the importance of the subject, she shuddered at a danger, which she could not comprehend, looking forward to the morrow with anxious impatience.

Sometimes too a remembrance of the tender interest he had expressed for her welfare, and of his correspondent look and air, would steal across her memory, awakening a pleasing emotion and a latent hope that she was not indifferent to him. From reflections like these she was roused by a summons to supper: the repast was a melancholy one, it being the last evening of Louis's stay at the abbey Adeline, who esteemed him, regretted his departure, while his eyes were often bent on her with a look which seemed to express that he was about to leave the object of his affection. She endeavoured by her cheerfulness to reanimate the whole party, and especially Madame La Motte, who frequently shed tears. "We shall soon meet again," said Adeline, "I trust, in happier circumstances." La Motte sighed. The countenance of Louis brightened at her words. "Do you wish it?" said he, with peculiar emphasis. "Most certainly I do," she replied. "Can you doubt my regard for my best friends?"

"I cannot doubt any thing that is good from you," said he.

"You forget you have left Paris," said La Motte to his son, while a smile crossed his face, "such a compliment would there be in character with the place—in these solitary woods it is quite *outre*."

"The language of admiration is not always that of compliment, Sir," said Louis. Adeline, willing to change the discourse, asked to what part of France he was going. He replied, that his regiment was now at Peronne, and he should go immediately thither. After some mention of indifferent subjects, the family withdrew for the night to their several chambers.

The approaching departure of her son occupied the thoughts of Madame La Motte, and she appeared at breakfast with eyes swollen with weeping. The pale countenance of Louis seemed to indicate that he had rested no better than his mother. When breakfast was over, Adeline retired for awhile, that she might not interrupt, by her presence, their last conversation. As she walked on the lawn before the abbey, she returned in thought to the occurrence of yesterday evening, and her impatience for the appointed interview increased. She was soon joined by Louis. "It was unkind of you to leave us," said he, "in the last moments of my stay. Could I hope that you would sometimes remember me, when I am far away, I should depart with less sorrow." He then expressed his concern at leaving her, and though he had hitherto armed himself with resolution to forbear a direct avowal of an attachment, which must be fruitless, his heart now yielded to the force of passion, and he told what Adeline every moment feared to hear.

"This declaration," said Adeline, endea-

vouring to overcome the agitation it excited, "gives me inexpressible concern."

"O say not so!" interrupted Louis, "but give me some slender hope to support me in the miseries of absence. Say that you do not hate me—Say"—

"That I do most readily say," replied Adeline, in a tremulous voice; "if it will give you pleasure to be assured of my esteem and friendship—receive this assurance: as the son of my best benefactors, you are entitled to"—

"Name not benefits," said Louis, "your merits outrun them all: and suffer me to hope for a sentiment less cool than that of friendship; do as well as believe that I do not owe your approbation of me to the actions of others. I have long borne my passion in silence, because I foresaw the difficulties that would attend it: nay, I have even dared to endeavour to overcome it; I have dared to believe it possible, forgive the supposition, that I could forget you—and"

"You distress me," interrupted Adeline; "this is a conversation which I ought not to hear. I am above disguise, and, therefore, assure you, that though your virtues will always command my esteem, you have nothing to hope from my love. Were it even otherwise, our circumstances would effectually decide for us. If you are really my friend, you will rejoice that I am spared this struggle between affection and prudence. Let me hope also, that time will teach you to reduce love within the limits of friendship."

"Never!" cried Louis vehemently: "Were this possible, my passion would be unworthy of its object. While he spoke, Adeline's favourite fawn came bounding towards her. This circumstance affected Louis even to tears.

"This little animal," said he, after a short pause, "first conducted me to you: it was witness to that happy moment when I first saw you, surrounded by attractions too powerful for my heart; that moment is now fresh in my memory, and the creature comes even to witness this sad one of my departure." Grief interrupted his utterance.

When he recovered his voice, he said, "Adeline, when you look upon your little favourite, and caress it, remember the unhappy Louis, who will then be far—far from you. Do not deny me the poor consolation of believing this!"

"I shall not require such a monitor to remind me of you," said Adeline, with a smile; "your excellent parents and your own merits have sufficient claim upon my remembrance. Could I see your natural good sense resume its influence over passion, my satisfaction would equal my esteem for you."

"Do not hope it," said Louis, "nor will I wish it—for passion here is virtue." As he spoke, he saw La Motte turn round an angle of the abbey. "The moments are precious," said he, "I am interrupted, O! Adeline, farewell! and say, that you will sometimes think of me."

"Farewell," said Adeline, who was affected by his distress; "farewell! and peace attend you. I will think of you with the affection of a sister." He sighed deeply, and pressed her hand; when La Motte, winding round another projection of the ruin, again appeared. Adeline left them together, and withdrew to her chamber, oppressed by the scene. Louis's passion and her esteem were too sincere not to inspire her with a strong degree of pity for his unhappy attachment. She remained in her

chamber till he had quitted the abbey, unwilling to subject him or herself to the pain of a formal parting.

As evening and the hour of appointment drew nigh, Adeline's impatience increased; yet, when the time arrived, her resolution failed, and she faltered from her purpose. There was something of indelicacy and dissimulation in an *appointed* interview, on her part that shocked her. She recollected the tenderness of Theodore's manner, and several little circumstances which seemed to indicate that his heart was not unconcerned in the event. Again she was inclined to doubt, whether he had not obtained her consent to this meeting, upon some groundless suspicion; and she almost determined not to go: yet it was possible Theodore's assertion might be sincere and her danger real; the chance of this made her delicate scruples ridiculous; she wondered that she had for a moment suffered them to weigh against so serious an interest, and blaming herself for the delay they had occasioned, hastened to the place of appointment.

The little path, which led to this spot, was silent and solitary, and when she reached the recess, Theodore had not arrived. A transient pride made her unwilling he should find that she was more punctual to his appointment than himself; and she turned from the recess into a track, which wound among the trees to the right. Having walked some way, without seeing any person, or hearing a footstep, she returned; but he was not come, and she again left the place. A second time she came back, and Theodore was still absent. Recollecting the time at which she had quitted the abbey, she grew uneasy, and calculated that the hour appointed was now much exceeded. She was

offended and perplexed; but she seated herself on the turf, and was resolved to wait the event. After remaining here till the fall of twilight in fruitless expectation, her pride became more alarmed; she feared that he had discovered something of the partiality he had inspired, and, believing that he now treated her with purposed neglect, she quitted the place with disgust and self accusation.

When these emotions subsided, and reason resumed its influence, she blushed for what she termed the childish effervescence of self love. She recollected, as if for the first time, these words of Theodore: "I fear you are deceived, and that some danger is near you." Her judgment now acquitted the offender, and she saw only the friend. The import of these words, whose truth she no longer doubted, again alarmed her. Why did he trouble himself to come from the chateau, on purpose to hint her danger, if he did not wish to preserve her? And if he wished to preserve her, what but necessity could have withheld him from the appointment?

These reflections decided her at once. She resolved to repair on the following day at the same hour to the recess; whither the interest, which she believed him to take in her fate would no doubt conduct him in the hope of meeting her. That some evil hovered over her she could not disbelieve, but what it might be, she was unable to guess. Monsieur and Madame La Motte were her friends, and who else, removed, as she now thought herself, beyond the reach of her father, could injure her? But why did Theodore say she was deceived? She found it impossible to extricate herself from the labyrinth of conjecture, but endeavoured to command her anxiety till the follow-

ing evening. In the mean-time she engaged herself in efforts to amuse Madame La Motte, who required some relief, after the departure of her son.

Thus oppressed by her own cares, and interested by those of Madame La Motte, Adeline retired to rest. She soon lost her recollection, but it was only to fall into harassed slumbers, such as but too often haunt the couch of the unhappy. At length her perturbed fancy suggested the following dream.

She thought she was in a large old chamber belonging to the abbey, more ancient and desolate, though in part furnished, than any she had yet seen. It was strongly barricadoed, yet no person appeared. While she stood musing and surveying the apartment, she heard a low voice call her, and looking towards the place from whence it came, she perceived by the dim light of a lamp, a figure stretched on a bed that lay on the floor. The voice called again, and, approaching the bed, she distinctly saw the features of a man who appeared to be dying. A ghastly paleness overspread his countenance, yet there was an expression of mildness and dignity in it, which strongly interested her.

While she looked on him, his features changed, and seemed convulsed in the agonies of death. The spectacle shocked her, and she started back, but he suddenly stretched forth his hand, and seizing hers, grasped it with violence; she struggled in terror to disengage herself, and again looking on his face, saw a man, who appeared to be about thirty, with the same features, but in full health, and of a most benign countenance. He smiled tenderly upon her, and moved his lips as if to speak, when the floor of the chamber suddenly open-

ed, and he sunk from her view. The effort she made to save herself from following, awoke her. This dream had so strongly impressed her fancy, that it was some time before she could overcome the terror it occasioned, or even be perfectly convinced she was in her own apartment. At length, however, she composed herself to sleep; again she fell into a dream.

She thought she was bewildered in some winding passages of the abbey; that it was almost dark, and that she wandered about a considerable time, without being able to find a door. Suddenly she heard a bell toll from above, and soon after a confusion of distant voices. She redoubled her efforts to extricate herself. Presently all was still, and at length wearied with the search, she sat down on a step that crossed the passage. She had not been long here, when she saw a light glimmer at a distance on the walls, but a turn in the passage, which was very long, prevented her seeing from what it proceeded. It continued to glimmer faintly for some time, and then grew stronger, when she saw a man enter the passage, habited in a long black cloak, like those usually worn by attendants at funerals, and bearing a torch. He called to her to follow him, and led her through a long passage to the foot of a staircase. Here she feared to proceed, and was running back, when the man suddenly turned to pursue her, and with the terror, which this occasioned, she awoke.

Shocked by those visions, and more so by their seeming connexion, which now struck her, she endeavoured to continue awake, lest their terrific images should again haunt her mind: after some time, however, her harassed spirits again sunk into slumber, though not to repose.

She now thought herself in a large old gallery, and saw at one end of it a chamber door standing a little open, and a light within: she went towards it, and perceived the man she had before seen, standing at the door, and beckoning her towards him. With the inconsistency so common in dreams, she no longer endeavoured to avoid him, but advancing, followed him into a suit of very ancient apartments, hung with black, and lighted up as if for a funeral. Still he led her on, till she found herself in the same chamber she remembered to have seen in her former dream; a coffin, covered with a pall, stood at the farther end of the room: some lights, and several persons surrounded it, who appeared to be in great distress.

Suddenly she thought these persons were all gone, and that she was left alone; that she went up to the coffin, and while she gazed upon it, she heard a voice speak as if from within, but saw nobody. The man she had before seen, soon after stood by the coffin, and lifting the pall, she saw beneath it a dead person, whom she thought to be the dying chevalier she had seen in her former dream: his features were sunk in death, but they were yet serene. While she looked at him, a stream of blood gushed from his side, and descending to the floor, the whole chamber was overflowed; at the same time some words were uttered in the voice she heard before; but the horror of the scene so entirely overcome her, that she started and awoke.

When she had recovered her recollection, she raised herself in the bed, to be convinced it was a dream she had witnessed, and the agitation of her spirits was so great, that she feared to be alone, and almost determined to call Annette. The features of the deceased per-

son, and the chamber where he lay, were strongly impressed upon her memory, and she still thought she heard the voice and saw the countenance which her dream represented. The longer she considered these dreams, the more she was surprised: they were so very terrible, returned so often, and seemed to be so connected with each other, that she could scarcely think them accidental; yet, why they should be supernatural, she could not tell. She slept no more that night.

CHAPTER VIII.

"——When these prodigies
Do so conjointly meet, let not men say,
These are their reasons, they are natural:
For I believe they are portentous things."
Julius Cesar.

When Adeline appeared at breakfast, her harassed and languid countenance struck Madame La Motte, who inquired if she was ill; Adeline, forcing a smile upon her features, said she had not rested well, for that she had had very disturbed dreams: she was about to describe them, but a strong and involuntary impulse prevented her. At the same time, La Motte ridiculed her concern so unmercifully, that she was almost ashamed to have mentioned it, and tried to overcome the remembrance of its cause.

After breakfast, she endeavoured to employ her thoughts by conversing with Madame La Motte; but they were really engaged by the incidents of the last two days; the circumstance of her dreams, and her conjectures concerning the information to be communicated to

her by Theodore. They had thus sat for some time, when a sound of voices arose from the great gate of the abbey; and on going to the casement, Adeline saw the Marquis and his attendants on the lawn below. The portal of the abbey concealed several people from her view, and among these it was possible might be Theodore, who had not yet appeared: she continued to look for him with great anxiety till the Marquis entered the hall with La Motte, and some other persons, soon after which Madame went to receive him, and Adeline retired to her own apartment.

A message from La Motte, however, soon called her to join the party, where she vainly hoped to find Theodore. The Marquis arose as she approached, and having paid her some general compliments, the conversation took a very lively turn. Adeline, finding it impossible to counterfeit cheerfulness, while her heart was sinking with anxiety and disappointment, took little part in it: Theodore was not once named. She would have asked concerning him, had it been possible to inquire with propriety; but she was obliged to content herself with hoping, first that he would arrive before dinner, and then before the departure of the Marquis.

Thus the day passed in expectation and disappointment. The evening was now approaching, and she was condemned to remain in the presence of the Marquis, apparently listening to a conversation, which in truth, she scarcely heard, while the opportunity was, perhaps, escaping that would decide her fate. She was suddenly relieved from this state of torture, and thrown into one, if possible, still more distressing.

The Marquis inquired for Louis, and being

informed of his departure, mentioned that Theodore Peyrou had that morning sat out for his regiment in a distant province. He lamented the loss he should sustain by his absence; and expressed some very flattering praise of his talents. The shock of this intelligence overpowered the long agitated spirits of Adeline; the blood forsook her cheeks, and a sudden faintness came over her, from which she recovered only to a consciousness of having discovered her emotion, and the danger of relapsing into a second fit.

She retired to her chamber, where, being once more alone, her oppressed heart found relief from tears, in which she freely indulged. Ideas crowded so fast upon her mind, that it was long ere she could arrange them so as to produce any thing like reasoning. She endeavoured to account for the abrupt departure of Theodore.

"Is it possible," said she, "that he should take an interest in my welfare, and yet leave me exposed to the full force of a danger, which he himself foresaw? Or am I to believe that he has trifled with my simplicity for an idle frolic, and has now left me to the wondering apprehensions he has raised? Impossible! a countenance so noble, and a manner so amiable, could never disguise a heart capable of forming so despicable a design. No!—whatever is reserved for me, let me not relinquish the pleasure of believing that he is worthy of my esteem."

She was awakened from thoughts like these by a peal of distant thunder, and now perceived that the gloominess of evening was deepened by the coming storm; it rolled onward, and soon after the lightning began to flash along the chamber. Adeline was superior to the af-

fectation of fear, and was not apt to be terrified; but she now felt it unpleasant to be alone, and, hoping that the Marquis might have left the abbey, she went down to the sitting room; but the threatening aspect of the Heavens had hitherto detained him, and now the evening tempest made him rejoice that he had not quitted the shelter. The storm continued, and night came on. La Motte pressed his guest to take a bed at the abbey, and he at length consented; a circumstance which threw Madame La Motte into some perplexity, as to the accommodation to be afforded him; after some time she arranged the affair to her satisfaction; resigning her own apartment to the Marquis, and that of Louis to two of his superior attendants; Adeline, it was farther settled, should give up her room to Monsieur and Madame La Motte, and remove to an inner chamber, where a small bed usually occupied by Annette, was placed for her

At supper the Marquis was less gay than usual; he frequently addressed Adeline, and his look and manner seemed to express the tenderest interest, which her indisposition, for she still appeared pale and languid, had excited. Adeline, as usual, made an effort to forget her anxiety, and appear happy; but the veil of assumed cheerfulness was too thin to conceal the features of sorrow; and her feeble smiles only added a peculiar softness to her air. The Marquis conversed with her on a variety of subjects, and displayed an elegant mind. The observations of Adeline, which when called upon, she gave with reluctant modesty, in words at once simple and forceful, seemed to excite his admiration, which he sometimes betrayed by an inadvertent expression.

Adeline retired early to her room, which ad-

joined on one side to Madame La Motte's, and on the other to the closet formerly mentioned. It was spacious and lofty, and what little furniture it contained was falling to decay; but, perhaps, the present tone of her spirits might contribute more than these circumstances to give that air of melancholy which seemed to reign in it. She was unwilling to go to bed, lest the dreams that had lately pursued her should return; and determined to sit up till she found herself oppressed by sleep, when it was probable her rest would be profound. She placed the light on a small table, and taking a book, continued to read for above an hour, till her mind refused any longer to abstract itself from its own cares, and she sat for some time leaning pensively on her arm.

The wind was high, and, as it whistled through the desolate apartment, and shook the feeble doors, she often started, and sometimes even thought she heard sighs between the pauses of the gust; but she checked these illusions, which the hour of the night and her own melancholy imagination conspired to raise. As she sat musing, her eyes fixed on the opposite wall, she perceived the arras, with which the room was hung, wave backward and forwards; she continued to observe it for some minutes, and then rose to examine it farther. It was moved by the wind; and she blushed at the momentary fear it had excited: but she observed that the tapestry was more strongly agitated in one particular place than elsewhere, and a noise that seemed something more than that of the wind issued thence. The old bedstead, which La Motte had found in his apartment, had been removed to accommodate Adeline, and it was behind the place where this had stood, that the wind seemed to rush with

particular force; curiosity prompted her to examine still farther; she felt about the tapestry, and perceiving the wall behind shake under her hand, she lifted the arras, and discovered a small door, whose loosened hinges admitted the wind, and occasioned the noise she had heard.

The door was held only by a bolt, having undrawn which, and brought the light, she descended by a few steps into another chamber: she instantly remembered her dreams. The chamber was not much like that in which she had seen the dying chevalier, and afterwards the bier; but it gave her a confused remembrance of one through which she had passed. Holding up the light to examine it more fully, she was convinced by its structure that it was part of the ancient foundation. A shattered casement, placed high from the floor, seemed to be the only opening to admit light. She observed a door on the opposite side of the apartment; and after some moments of hesitation, gained courage, and determined to pursue the inquiry. "A mystery seems to hang over these chambers," said she, "which it is perhaps my lot to develope; I will, at least, see to what that door leads."

She stepped forward, and having unclosed it, proceeded with faltering steps along a suite of apartments, resembling the first in style and condition, and terminating in one exactly like that where her dream had represented the dying person; the remembrance struck so forcibly upon her imagination, that she was in danger of fainting; and looking round the room, almost expected to see the phantom of her dream.

Unable to quit the place, she sat down on some old lumber to recover herself, while her spirits were nearly overcome by a superstitious

dread, such as she had never felt before. She wondered to what part of the abbey these chambers belonged, and that they had so long escaped detection. The casements were all too high to afford any information from without. When she was sufficiently composed to consider the direction of the rooms, and the situation of the abbey, there appeared not a doubt that they formed an interior part of the original building.

As these reflections passed over her mind, a sudden gleam of moonlight fell upon some object without the casement. Being now sufficiently composed to wish to pursue the inquiry; and believing this object might afford her some means of learning the situation of these rooms, she combated her remaining terrors, and in order to distinguish more clearly, removed the light to an outer chamber; but before she could return, a heavy cloud was driven over the face of the moon, and all without was perfectly dark: she stood for some moments waiting a returning gleam, but the obscurity continued. As she went softly back for the light, her foot stumbled over something on the floor, and while she stopped to examine it, the moon again shone, so that she could distinguish through the casement the eastern towers of the abbey. This discovery confirmed her former conjectures concerning the interior situation of these apartments. The obscurity of the place prevented her discovering what it was that had impeded her steps, but having brought the light forward, she perceived on the floor an old dagger: with a trembling hand she took it up, and upon a closer view perceived that it was spotted and stained with rust.

Shocked and surprised, she looked round the room for some object that might confirm or de-

stroy the dreadful suspicion which now rushed upon her mind; but she saw only a great chair, with broken arms, that stood in one corner of the room, and a table in a condition equally shattered, except that in another part lay a confused heap of things, which appeared to be old lumber. She went up to it, and perceived a broken bedstead, with some decayed remnants of furniture covered with dust and cobwebs, and which seemed, indeed, as if they had not been moved for many years. Desirous, however, of examining farther, she attempted to raise what appeared to have been part of the bedstead, but it slipped from her hand, and rolling to the floor, brought with it some of the remaining lumber. Adeline started aside, and saved herself, and when the noise it made had ceased, she heard a small rustling sound, and as she was about to leave the chamber, saw something falling gently among the lumber.

It was a small roll of paper, tied with a string, and covered with dust. Adeline took it up, and on opening it perceived a handwriting. She attempted to read it, but the part of the manuscript she looked at was so much obliterated, that she found this difficult, though what few words were legible impressed her with curiosity and terror, and induced her to return with it immediately to her chamber.

Having reached her own room, she fastened the private door, and let the arras fall over it as before. It was now midnight. The stillness of the hour, interrupted only at intervals by the hollow sighings of the blast, heightened the solemnity of Adeline's feelings. She wished she was not alone, and before she proceeded to look into the manuscript, listened whether Madame La Motte was yet in her chamber:

not the least sound was heard, and she gently opened the door. The profound silence within almost convinced her that no person was there; but willing to be farther satisfied, she brought the light, and found the room empty. The lateness of the hour made her wonder that Madame La Motte was not in her chamber, and she proceeded to the top of the tower stairs to hearken if any person was stirring.

She heard the sound of voices from below, and amongst the rest that of La Motte speaking in his usual tone. Being now satisfied that all was well, she turned towards her room, when she heard the Marquis pronounce her name with very unusual emphasis. She paused. "I adore her," pursued he, "and by heaven"—he was interrupted by La Motte, "My Lord, remember your promise."

"I do," replied the Marquis, "and I will abide by it. But we trifle. To-morrow I will declare myself, and I shall then know both what to hope and how to act." Adeline trembled so excessively, that she could scarcely support herself: she wished to return to her chamber; yet she was too much interested, in the words she had heard, not to be anxious to have them more fully explained. There was an interval of silence, after which they conversed in a lower tone. Adeline remembered the hints of Theodore, and determined, if possible, to be relieved from the terrible suspense she now suffered. She stole softly down a few steps, that she might catch the accents of the speakers, but they were so low that she could only now and then distinguish a few words. "Her father, say you?" said the Marquis. "Yes, my Lord, her father. I am well informed of what I say." Adeline shuddered at the mention of her father; a new terror seized her,

and with increasing eagerness she endeavoured to distinguish their words, but for some time she found this to be impossible. "Here is no time to be lost," said the Marquis, "to-morrow then."—She heard La Motte rise, and believing it was to leave the room, she hurried up the steps, and having reached her chamber, sunk almost lifeless in a chair.

It was her father only of whom she thought. She doubted not that he had pursued and discovered her retreat, and though this conduct appeared very inconsistent with his former behaviour in abandoning her to strangers, her fears suggested that it would terminate in some new cruelty. She did not hesitate to pronounce this the danger of which Theodore had warned her; but it was impossible to surmise how he had gained his knowledge of it, or how he had become sufficiently acquainted with her story, except through La Motte, her apparent friend and protector, whom she was thus, though unwillingly, led to suspect of treachery. Why, indeed, should La Motte conceal from her only his knowledge of her father's intention, unless he designed to deliver her into his hands? Yet it was long ere she could bring herself to believe this conclusion possible. To discover depravity in those whom we have loved, is one of the most exquisite tortures to a virtuous mind, and the conviction is often rejected before it is finally admitted.

The words of Theodore, which told her he was fearful she was deceived, confirmed this most painful apprehension of La Motte, with another yet more distressing, that Madame La Motte was also united against her. This thought, for a moment, subdued terror, and left her only grief; she wept bitterly. "Is this human nature?" cried she. "Am I doomed to

find every body deceitful?" An unexpected discovery of vice in those whom we have admired, inclines us to extend our censure of the individual to the species; we henceforth contemn appearances, and too hastily conclude that no person is to be trusted.

Adeline determined to throw herself at the feet of La Motte on the following morning, and implore his pity and protection. Her mind was now too much agitated by her own interests, to permit her to examine the manuscript, and she sat musing in her chair, till she heard the steps of Madame La Motte, when she retired to bed. La Motte soon after came up to his chamber, and Adeline, the mild persecuted Adeline, who had now passed two days of torturing anxiety, and one night of terrific visions, endeavoured to compose her mind to sleep. In the present state of her spirits, she quickly caught alarm, and she had scarcely fallen into a slumber, when she was roused by a loud and uncommon noise. She listened, and thought the sound came from the apartments below, but in a few minutes there was a hasty knocking at the door of La Motte's chamber.

La Motte, who had just fallen asleep, was not easily to be roused, but the knocking increased with such violence, that Adeline, extremely terrified, arose and went to the door that opened from her chamber into his, with a design to call him. She was stopped by the voice of the Marquis, which she now clearly distinguished at the door. He called La Motte to rise immediately, and Madame La Motte endeavoured at the same time to rouse her husband, who at length awoke in much alarm, and soon after, joining the Marquis, they went down stairs together. Adeline now dressed herself, as well as her trembling hands would

permit, and went into the adjoining chamber, where she found Madame La Motte extremely surprised and terrified.

The Marquis, in the meantime, told La Motte with great agitation, that he recollected having appointed some persons to meet him upon business of importance, early in the morning, and it was, therefore, necessary for him to set off for his chateau immediately. As he said this, and desired that his servants might be called, La Motte could not help observing the ashy paleness of his countenance, or expressing some apprehension that his Lordship was ill. The Marquis assured him he was perfectly well, but desired that he might set out immediately. Peter was now ordered to call the other servants, and the Marquis, having refused to take any refreshment, bade La Motte a hasty adieu, and, as soon as his people were ready, left the abbey.

La Motte returned to his chamber, musing on the abrupt departure of his guest, whose emotion appeared much too strong to proceed from the cause assigned.—He appeased the anxiety of Madame La Motte, and at the same time excited her surprise by acquainting her with the occasion of the late disturbance. Adeline, who had retired from the chamber, on the approach of La Motte, looked out from her window on hearing the trampling of horses. It was the Marquis and his people, who just then passed at a little distance. Unable to distinguish who the persons were, she was alarmed at observing such a party about the abbey at that hour, and, calling to inform La Motte of the circumstance, was made acquainted with what had passed.

At length she retired to her bed, and her slumbers were this night undisturbed by dreams.

When she arose in the morning, she observed La Motte walking alone in the avenue below, and she hastened to seize the opportunity which now offered of pleading her cause. She approached him with faltering steps, while the paleness and timidity of her countenance discovered the disorder of her mind. Her first words, without entering upon any explanation, implored his compassion. La Motte stopped, and looking earnestly in her face, inquired whether any part of his conduct towards her merited the suspicion which her request implied. Adeline for a moment blushed that she had doubted his integrity, but the words she had overheard returned to her memory.

"Your behaviour, Sir," said she, "I acknowledge to have been kind and generous, beyond what I had a right to expect, but"—and she paused. She knew not how to mention what she blushed to believe. La Motte continued to gaze on her in silent expectation, and at length desired her to proceed and explain her meaning. She entreated that he would protect her from her father. La Motte looked surprised and confused. "Your father!" said he. "Yes, Sir," replied Adeline; "I am not ignorant that he has discovered my retreat. I have every thing to dread from a parent, who has treated me with such cruelty as you were witness of; and I again implore that you will save me from his hands."

La Motte stood fixed in thought, and Adeline continued her endeavours to interest his pity. "What reason have you to suppose, or rather, how have you learned that your father pursues you?" The question confused Adeline, who blushed to acknowledge that she had overheard his discourse, and disdained to invent or utter a falsity: at length she confessed the truth.

The countenance of La Motte instantly changed to a savage fierceness, and sharply rebuking her for a conduct, to which she had been rather tempted by chance, than prompted by design, he inquired what she had overheard that could so much alarm her. She faithfully repeated the substance of the incoherent sentences that had met her ear; while she spoke, he regarded her with a fixed attention. "And was this all you heard? Is it from these few words that you draw such a positive conclusion? Examine them, and you will find that they do not justify it."

She now perceived, what the fervour of her fears had not permitted her to observe before, that the words, unconnectedly as she heard them, imported little, and that her imagination had filled up the void in the sentences, so as to suggest the evil apprehended. Notwithstanding this, her fears were little abated. "Your apprehensions are, doubtless, now removed," resumed La Motte; "but to give you a proof of the sincerity which you have ventured to question, I will tell you they were just. You seem alarmed, and with reason. Your father has discovered your residence, and has already demanded you. It is true, that from a motive of compassion I have refused to resign you, but I have neither authority to withhold, or means to defend you. When he comes to enforce his demand, you will perceive this. Prepare yourself, therefore, for the evil which you see is inevitable."

Adeline, for some time, could speak only by her tears. At length, with a fortitude which despair had roused, she said, "I resign myself to the will of heaven!" La Motte gazed on her in silence, and a strong emotion appeared in his countenance. He forbore, however, to

renew the discourse, and withdrew to the abbey, leaving Adeline in the avenue, absorbed in grief.

A summons to breakfast hastened her to the parlour, where she passed the morning in conversation with Madame La Motte, to whom she told all her apprehensions, and expressed all her sorrow. Pity and superficial consolation were allthat Madame La Motte could offer, though apparently much affected by Adeline's discourse. Thus the hours passed heavily away, while the anxiety of Adeline continued to increase, and the moment of her fate seemed fast approaching. Dinner was scarcely over when Adeline was surprised to see the Marquis arrive. He entered the room with his usual ease, and apologizing for the disturbance he had occasioned on the preceding night, repeated what he had before told La Motte.

The remembrance of the conversation, which she had overheard, at first gave Adeline some confusion, and withdrew her mind from a sense of the evils to be apprehended from her father. The Marquis, who was, as usual, attentive to Adeline, seemed affected by her apparent indisposition, and expressed much concern for that dejection of spirits which, notwithstanding every effort, her manner betrayed. When Madame La Motte withdrew, Adeline would have followed her, but the Marquis entreated a few moments' attention, and led her back to her seat. La Motte immediately disappeared.

Adeline knew too well what would be the purport of the Marquis's discourse, and his words soon increased the confusion which her fears had occasioned. While he was declaring the ardour of his passion in such terms as but too often make vehemence pass for since-

rity, Adeline, to whom this declaration, if honourable, was distressing, and if dishonourable, was shocking, interrupted him, and thanked him for the offer of a distinction which, with a modest but determined air, she said she must refuse. She rose to withdraw. "Stay, too lovely Adeline!" said he, "and if compassion for my sufferings will not interest you in my favour, allow a consideration of your own dangers to do so. Monsieur La Motte has informed me of your misfortunes, and of the evil that now threatens you; accept from me the protection which he cannot afford."

Adeline continued to move towards the door, when the Marquis threw himself at her feet, and seizing her hand, impressed it with kisses. She struggled to disengage herself. "Hear me, charming Adeline! hear me," cried the Marquis; "I exist but for you. Listen to my entreaties, and my fortune shall be yours. Do not drive me to despair by ill-judged rigour, or because"—

"My Lord," interrupted Adeline, with an air of ineffable dignity, and still affecting to believe his proposal honourable, "I am sensible of the generosity of your conduct, and also flattered by the distinction you offer me; I will, therefore, say something more than is necessary, to a bare expression of the denial which I must continue to give. I *cannot* bestow my heart. *You cannot* obtain more than my esteem, to which, indeed, nothing can so much contribute as a forbearance from any similar offers in future."

She again attempted to go, but the Marquis prevented her, and after some hesitation, again urged his suit, though in terms that would no longer allow her to misunderstand him. Tears

swelled into her eyes, but she endeavoured to check them, and, with a look in which grief and indignation seemed to struggle for pre-eminence, she said, "My Lord, this is unworthy of reply, let me pass."

For a moment he was awed by the dignity of her manner, and he threw himself at her feet to implore forgiveness. But she waved her hand in silence, and hurried from the room. When she reached her chamber, she locked the door, and sinking into a chair, yielded to the sorrow that pressed her heart. And it was not the least of her sorrow to suspect that La Motte was unworthy of her confidence; for it was almost impossible that he could be ignorant of the real designs of the Marquis. Madame La Motte, she believed, was imposed upon by a specious pretence of honourable attachment; and thus was she spared the pang which a doubt of her integrity would have added.

She threw a trembling glance upon the prospect around her. On one side was her father, whose cruelty had already been too plainly manifested; and on the other, the Marquis pursuing her with insult, and vicious passion. She resolved to acquaint Madame La Motte with the purport of the late conversation, and, in the hope of her protection and sympathy, she wiped away her tears, and was leaving the room just as Madame La Motte entered it. While Adeline related what had passed, her friend wept, and appeared to suffer great agitation. She endeavoured to comfort her, and promised to use her influence in persuading La Motte to prohibit the addresses of the Marquis. "You know, my dear," added Madame, "that our present circumstances oblige us to preserve terms with the Marquis, and you will, therefore, suffer as little resentment to appear in

your manner towards him as possible; conduct yourself with your usual ease in his presence, and I doubt not this affair will pass over, without subjecting you to farther solicitation."

"Ah, Madame!" said Adeline, "how hard is the task you assign me! I entreat you that I may never more be subjected to the humiliation of being in his presence; that, whenever he visits the abbey, I may be suffered to remain in my chamber."

"This," said Madame La Motte, "I would most readily consent to, would our situation permit it. But you well know our asylum in this abbey depends upon the good will of the Marquis, which we must not wantonly lose; and surely such a conduct as you propose would endanger this. Let us use milder measures, and we shall preserve his friendship, without subjecting you to any serious evil. Appear with your usual complacence: the task is not so difficult as you imagine."

Adeline sighed. "I obey you, Madame," said she; "it is my duty to do so; but I may be pardoned for saying, it is with extreme reluctance." Madame La Motte promised to go immediately to her husband, and Adeline departed, though not convinced of her safety, yet somewhat more at ease.

She soon after saw the Marquis depart, and, as there now appeared to be no obstacle to the return of Madame La Motte, she expected her with extreme impatience. After thus waiting near an hour in her chamber, she was at length summoned to the parlour, and there found La Motte alone. He arose upon her entrance, and for some minutes paced the room in silence. He then seated himself, and addressed her: "What you have mentioned to Madame La Motte," said he, "would give me

much concern, did I consider the behaviour of the Marquis in a light so serious as she does. I know that young ladies are apt to misconstrue the unmeaning gallantry of fashionable manners, and you Adeline, can never be too cautious in distinguishing between levity of this kind, and a more serious address."

Adeline was surprised and offended that La Motte should think so lightly both of her understanding and disposition as his speech implied. "It is impossible, Sir," said she, "that you have been apprized of the Marquis's conduct?"

"It is very possible, and very certain," replied La Motte, with some asperity; "and very possible, also, that I may see this affair with a judgment less discoloured by prejudice than you do. But, however, I shall not dispute this point. I shall only request, that, since you are acquainted with the emergency of my circumstances, you will conform to them, and not, by an ill timed resentment, expose me to the enmity of the Marquis. He is now my friend, and it is necessary to my safety that he should continue such; but if I suffer any part of my family to treat him with rudeness, I must expect to see him my enemy. You may surely treat him with complaisance." Adeline thought the term *rudeness* a harsh one as La Motte applied it, but she forbore from any expression of displeasure. "I could have wished, Sir," said she, "for the privilege of retiring whenever the Marquis appeared; but since you believe this conduct would affect your interest, I ought to submit."

"This prudence and good will delight me," said La Motte, "and since you wish to serve me, know that you cannot more effectually do it, than by treating the Marquis as a friend."

The word *friend*, as it stood connected with the Marquis, sounded dissonantly to Adeline's ear; she hesitated, and looked at La Motte. "As *your* friend, Sir," said she; "I will endeavour to"—treat him as mine, she would have said, but she found it impossible to finish the sentence. She entreated his protection from the power of her father.

"What protection I can afford is yours," said La Motte, "but you know how destitute I am both of the right and the means of resisting him, and also how much I require protection myself. Since he has discovered your retreat, he is probably not ignorant of the circumstances which detain me here, and if I oppose him, he may betray me to the officers of the law, as the surest method of obtaining possession of you. We are encompassed with dangers," continued La Motte; "would I could see any method of extricating ourselves!"

"Quit this abbey," said Adeline, "and seek an asylum in Switzerland or Germany; you will then be freed from farther obligation to the Marquis, and from the persecution you dread. Pardon me for thus offering advice, which is certainly, in some degree, prompted by a sense of my own safety, but which, at the same time, seems to afford the only means of ensuring yours."

"Your plan is reasonable," said La Motte, "had I money to execute it. As it is, I must be contented to remain here, as little known as possible, and defending myself by making those who know me my friends. Chiefly I must endeavour to preserve the favour of the Marquis. He may do much should your father even pursue desperate measures. But why do I talk thus? Your father may ere this

have commenced these measures, and the effects of his vengeance may now be hanging over my head. My regard for you, Adeline, has exposed me to this; had I resigned you to his will, I should have remained secure."

Adeline was so much affected by this instance of La Motte's kindness, which she could not doubt, that she was unable to express her sense of it. When she could speak, she uttered her gratitude in the most lively terms. "Are you sincere in these expressions?" said La Motte.

"Is it possible I can be less than sincere?" replied Adeline, weeping at the idea of ingratitude. "Sentiments are easily pronounced," said La Motte, "though they may have no connexion with the heart; I believe them to be sincere so far only as they influence our actions."

"What mean you, Sir?" said Adeline with surprise.

"I mean to inquire whether, if an opportunity should ever offer of thus proving your gratitude, you would adhere to your sentiments."

"Name one that I shall refuse," said Adeline with energy.

"If for instance, the Marquis should hereafter avow a serious passion for you, and offer you his hand, would no petty resentment, no lurking prepossession for some more happy lover, prompt you to refuse it?"

Adeline blushed, and fixed her eyes on the ground. "You have, indeed, Sir, named the only means I should reject of evincing my sincerity. The Marquis I can never love, nor, to speak sincerely, ever esteem. I confess the peace of one's whole life is too much to sacrifice even to gratitude." La Motte looked dis-

pleased. "'Tis as I thought," said he; "these delicate sentiments make a fine appearance in speech, and render the person who utters them infinitely amiable; but bring them to the test of action, and they dissolve into air, leaving only the wreck of vanity behind."

This unjust sarcasm brought tears to her eyes. "Since your safety, Sir, depends upon my conduct," said she, "resign me to my father. I am willing to return to him, since my stay here must involve you in new misfortunes. Let me not prove myself unworthy of the protection I have hitherto experienced, by preferring my own welfare to yours. When I am gone, you will have no reason to apprehend the Marquis's displeasure, which you may probably incur if I stay here: for I feel it impossible that I could even consent to receive his addresses, however honourable were his views."

La Motte seemed hurt and alarmed. "This must not be," said he; "let us not harass ourselves by starting *possible* evils, and then, to avoid them, fly to those which are certain. No, Adeline, though you are ready to sacrifice yourself to my safety, I will not suffer you to do so. I will not yield you to your father, but upon compulsion. Be satisfied, therefore, upon this point. The only return I ask, is a civil deportment towards the Marquis."

"I will endeavour to obey you, Sir," said Adeline.—Madame La Motte now entered the room, and this conversation ceased. Adeline passed the evening in melancholy thoughts, and retired, as soon as possible, to her chamber, eager to seek in sleep a refuge from sorrow.

CHAPTER IX.

"Full many a melancholy night
He watched the slow return of light,
And sought the powers of sleep,
To spread a momentary calm
O'er his sad couch, and in the balm
Of bland oblivion's dews his burning eyes to steep."
Warton.

THE MS. found by Adeline, the preceding night, had several times occurred to her recollection in the course of the day, but she had then been either too much interested by the events of the moment, or too apprehensive of interruption, to attempt a perusal of it. She now took it from the drawer in which it had been deposited, and intending only to look cursorily over the few first pages, sat down with it by her bedside.

She opened it with an eagerness of inquiry, which the discoloured and almost obliterated ink but slowly gratified. The first words on the page were entirely lost, but those that appeared to commence the narrative were as follows:

"O! ye, whoever ye are, whom chance or misfortune may hereafter conduct to this spot —to ye I speak—to ye reveal the story of my wrongs, and ask ye to avenge them. Vain hope! yet it imparts some comfort to believe it possible that what I now write may one day meet the eye of a fellow-creature; that the words, which tell my sufferings, may one day draw pity from the feeling heart.

Yet stay your tears—your pity now is useless: long since have the pangs of misery ceased; the voice of complaining is passed away. It is weakness to wish for compassion

which cannot be felt till I shall sink in the repose of death, and taste, I hope, the happiness of eternity!

Know then, that on the night of the twelfth of October, in the year 1642, I was arrested on the road to Caux, and on the very spot where a column is erected to the memory of the immortal Henry, by four ruffians, who, after disabling my servant, bore me through wilds and woods to this abbey. Their demeanour was not that of common banditti, and I soon perceived they were employed by a superior power to perpetrate some dreadful purpose. Entreaties and bribes were vainly offered them to discover their employer, and abandon their design. they would not reveal even the least circumstance of their intentions.

But when, after a long journey, they arrived at this edifice, their base employer was at once revealed, and this horrid scheme but too well understood. What a moment was that! All the thunders of Heaven seemed launched at this defenceless head! O fortitude, nerve my heart to"—

Adeline's light was now expired in the socket, and the paleness of the ink so feebly shone upon, baffled her efforts to discriminate the letters: it was impossible to procure a light from below, without discovering that she was yet up; a circumstance which would excite surprise, and lead to explanations, such as she did not wish to enter upon. Thus compelled to suspend the inquiry, which so many attendant circumstances had rendered awfully interesting, she retired to her humble bed.

What she had read of the MS. awakened a dreadful interest in the fate of the writer, and called up terrific images to her mind. "In these apartments?" said she, and she shudder-

ed and closed her eyes. At length, she heard Madame La Motte enter her chamber, and the phantoms of fear beginning to dissipate, left her to repose.

In the morning she was awakened by Madame La Motte, and found, to her disappointment, that she had slept so much beyond her usual time, as to be unable to renew the perusal of the MS. La Motte appeared uncommonly gloomy, and Madame wore an air of melancholy, which Adeline attributed to the concern she felt for her. Breakfast was scarcely over, when the sound of horses' feet announced the arrival of the stranger; and Adeline, from the inner recess of the hall, saw the Marquis alight. She retreated with precipitation, and forgetting the request of La Motte, was hastening to her chamber; but the Marquis was already in the hall, and seeing her leaving it, turned to La Motte with a look of inquiry. La Motte called her back, and by a frown too intelligent, reminded her of her promise. She summoned all her spirits to her aid, but advanced, notwithstanding, in visible emotion, while the Marquis addressed her as usual, the same easy gayety playing upon his countenance, and directing his manner.

Adeline was surprised and shocked at this careless confidence, which however, by awakening her pride, communicated to her an air of dignity that abashed him. He spoke with hesitation, and frequently appeared abstracted from the subject of discourse. At length arising, he begged Adeline would favour him with a few moments' conversation. Monsieur and Madame La Motte were now leaving the room, when Adeline turning to the Marquis, told him, "she would not hear any conversation, except in the presence of her friends."

But she said it in vain, for they were gone; and La Motte, as he withdrew, expressed by his looks how much an attempt to follow would displease him.

She sat for some time in silence, and trembling expectation. "I am sensible," said the Marquis, at length, "that the conduct to which the ardour of my passion lately betrayed me, has injured me in your opinion, and that you will not easily restore me to your esteem; but, I trust, the offer which I now make you, both of my *title* and fortune, will sufficiently prove the sincerity of my attachment, and atone for the transgression which love only prompted."

After this specimen of common place verbosity, which the Marquis seemed to consider as a prelude to triumph, he attempted to impress a kiss upon the hand of Adeline, who, withdrawing it hastily, said, "You are already, my Lord, acquainted with my sentiments upon this subject, and it is almost unnecessary for me now to repeat, that I cannot accept the honour you offer me."

"Explain yourself, lovely Adeline! I am ignórant that till now I ever made you this offer."

"Mosttrue, Sir," said Adeline, "and you do well to remind me of this, since, after having heard your former proposal, I can listen for a moment to any other." She rose to quit the room. "Stay, madam," said the Marquis, with a look, in which offended pride struggled to conceal itself; "do not suffer an extravagant resentment to operate against your true interests; recollect the dangers that surround you, and consider the value of an offer, which may afford you at least an honourable asylum,"

"My misfortunes, my Lord, whatever they are, I have never obtruded upon you; you will, therefore, excuse my observing, that your present mention of them conveys a much greater appearance of insult than compassion." The Marquis, though with evident confusion, was going to reply; but Adeline would not be detained, and retired to her chamber. Destitute as she was, her heart revolted from the proposal of the Marquis, and she determined never to accept it. To her dislike of his general disposition, and the aversion excited by his late offer, was added, indeed, the influence of a prior attachment, and of a remembrance, which she found it impossible to erase from her heart.

The Marquis stayed to dine, and in consideration of La Motte, Adeline appeared at table, where the former gazed upon her with such frequent and silent earnestness, that her distress became insupportable, and when the cloth was drawn, she instantly retired. Madame La Motte soon followed, and it was not till evening that she had an opportunity of returning to the MS. When Monsieur and Madame La Motte were in their chamber, and all was still, she drew forth the narrative, and trimming her lamp, sat down to read as follows:

"The ruffians unbound me from my horse, and led me through the hall up the spiral staircase of the abbey; resistance was useless, but I looked around in hope of seeing some person less obdurate than the men who brought me hither; some one who might be sensible to pity, and capable at least of civil treatment. I looked in vain; no person appeared; and this circumstance confirmed my worst apprehensions. The secrecy of the business foretold a horrible conclusion. Having passed some chambers, they stopped in one hung with old tapestry. I

inquired why we did not go on, and was told I should soon know.

"At that moment I expected to see the instrument of death uplifted, and silently recommended myself to God; but death was not then designed for me; they drew aside the arras, and discovered a door, which they then opened. Seizing my arms, they led me through a suit of dismal chambers beyond. Having reached the farthest of these, they again stopped: the horrid gloom of the place seemed congenial to murder, and inspired deadly thoughts. Again I looked round for the instrument of destruction, and again I was respited. I supplicated to know what was designed me: it was now unnecessary to ask who was the author of the design. They were silent to my question, but at length told me this chamber was my prison Having said this, and set down a jug of water, they left the room, and I heard the door barred upon me.

"O sound of despair! O moment of unutterable anguish! The pang of death itself is, surely, not superior to that I then suffered. Shut out from day, from friends, from life—*for such I must foretell it*—in the prime of my years, in the height of my transgressions, and left to imagine horrors more terrible than any, perhaps, which certainty could give—I sink beneath the"—

Here several pages of the manuscript were decayed with damp, and totally illegible. With much difficulty Adeline made out the following lines:

"Three days have now passed in solitude and silence: the horrors of death are ever before my eyes, let me endeavour to prepare for the dreadful change! When I awake in the morning I think I shall not live to see another

night; and when night returns, that I must never more unclose my eyes on morning. Why am I brought hither—why confined thus rigorously—but for death! Yet what action of my life has deserved this at the hand of a fellow-creature?—Of—

O my children! O friends far distant! I shall never see you more—never more receive the parting look of kindness—never bestow a parting blessing! Ye know not my wretched state—alas! ye cannot know it by human means. Ye believe me happy, or ye would fly to my relief. I know that what I now write cannot avail me, yet there is comfort in pouring forth my griefs; and I bless that man, less savage than his fellows, who has supplied me these means of recording them. Alas! he knows full well, that from the indulgence he has nothing to fear. My pen can call no friends to succour me, nor reveal my danger ere it is too late. O! ye, who may hereafter read what I now write, give a tear to my sufferings: I have wept often for the distresses of my fellow-creatures!"

Adeline paused. Here the wretched writer appealed directly to her heart; he spoke in the energy of truth, and, by a strong illusion of fancy, it seemed as if his past sufferings were at this moment present. She was for some time unable to proceed, and sat in musing sorrow. "In these very apartments," said she, "this poor sufferer was confined—here he"—Adeline started, and thought she heard a sound; but the stillness of night was undisturbed. "In these very chambers," said she, "these lines were written—these lines from which he then derived a comfort in believing they would hereafter be read by some pitying eye: this time is now come. Your miseries, O injured being! are lamented,

where they were endured. *Here*, where you suffered, I weep for your sufferings!"

Her imagination was now strongly impressed, and to her distempered senses the suggestions of a bewildered mind appeared with the force of reality. Again she started and listened, and thought she heard "*Here*" distinctly repeated by a whisper immediately behind her. The terror of the thought, however, was but momentary; she knew it could not be; convinced that her fancy had deceived her, she took up the MS. and again began to read.

"For what am I reserved! Why this delay! If I am to die—why not quickly? Three weeks have I now passed within these walls, during which time, no look of pity has softened my afflictions; no voice, save my own, has met my ear. The countenance of the ruffians who attend me, are stern and inflexible, and their silence is obstinate. This stillness is dreadful! O! ye, who have known what it is to live in the depths of solitude, who have passed your dreary days without one sound to cheer you; ye, and ye only, can tell now what I feel; and ye may know how much I would endure to hear the accents of a human voice.

"O dire extremity! O state of living death! What dreadful stillness! All around me is dead; and do I really exist, or am I but a statue? Is this a vision? Are these things real? Alas, I am bewildered!—this death-like and perpetual silence—this dismal chamber—the dread of farther sufferings have disturbed my fancy. O for some friendly breast to lay my wearied head on! some cordial accents to revive my soul!

* * * * *

I write by stealth. He who furnished me with the means, I fear, has suffered for some

symptoms of pity he may have discovered for me; I have not seen him for several days: perhaps he is inclined to help me, and for that reason is forbidden to come. O that hope! but how vain. Never more must I quit these walls while life remains. Another day is gone, and yet I live; at this time to-morrow night my sufferings may be sealed in death. I will continue my journal nightly, till the hand that writes shall be stopped by death; when the journal ceases, the reader will know I am no more. Perhaps, these are the last lines I shall ever write."

* * * * *

Adeline paused, while her tears fell fast. "Unhappy man!" she exclaimed, "and was there no pitying soul to save thee! Great God! thy ways are wonderful?" While she sat musing, her fancy, which now wandered in the regions of terror, gradually subdued her reason. There was a glass before her upon the table, and she feared to raise her looks towards it, lest some other face than her own should meet her eyes: other dreadful ideas, and strange images of fantastic thought now crossed her mind.

A hollow sigh seemed to pass near her. "Holy Virgin, protect me!" cried she, and threw a fearful glance round the room; "this is surely something more than fancy." Her fears so far overcame her, that she was several times upon the point of calling up part of the family, but unwillingness to disturb them, and a dread of ridicule, withheld her. She was also afraid to move and almost to breathe. As she listened to the wind, that murmured at the casements of her lonely chamber, she again thought she heard a sigh. Her imagination refused any longer the control of reason, and

turning her eyes, a figure, whose exact form she could not distinguish, appeared to pass along an obscure part of the chamber; a dreadful chillness came over her, and she sat fixed in her chair. At length a deep sigh somewhat relieved her oppressed spirits, and her senses seemed to return.

All remaining quiet, after some time she began to question whether her fancy had not deceived her, and she so far conquered her terror as to desist from calling Madame La Motte: her mind was, however, so much disturbed, that she did not venture to trust herself that night again with the MS. but having spent some time in prayer, and in endeavouring to compose her spirits, she retired to bed.

When she awoke in the morning, the cheerful sunbeams played upon the casements, and dispelled the illusion of darkness: her mind, soothed and invigorated by sleep, rejected the mystic and turbulent promptings of imagination. She arose refreshed and thankful; but, upon going down to breakfast, this transient gleam of peace fled upon the appearance of the Marquis, whose frequent visits at the abbey, after what had passed, not only displeased, but alarmed her. She saw that he was determined to persevere in addressing her, and the boldness and insensibility of this conduct, while it excited her indignation, increased her disgust. In pity to La Motte, she endeavoured to conceal these emotions, though she now thought that he required too much from her complaisance, and began seriously to consider how she might avoid the necessity of continuing it. The Marquis behaved to her with the most respectful attention: but Adeline was silent and reserved, and seized the first opportunity of withdrawing.

As she passed up the spiral staircase, Peter entered the hall below, and seeing Adeline, he stopped and looked earnestly at her: she did not observe him, but he called her softly, and she then saw him make a signal as if he had something to communicate. In the next instant La Motte opened the door of the vaulted room, and Peter hastily disappeared. She proceeded to her chamber, ruminating upon this signal, and the cautious manner in which Peter had given it.

But her thoughts soon returned to their wonted subjects. Three days were now passed, and she heard no intelligence of her father; she began to hope that he had relented from the violent measures hinted at by La Motte, and that he meant to pursue a milder plan; but when she considered his character, this appeared improbable, and she relapsed into her former fears. Her residence at the abbey was now become painful, from the perseverance of the Marquis, and the conduct which La Motte obliged her to adopt; yet she could not think without dread of quitting it to return to her father.

The image of Theodore often intruded upon her busy thoughts, and brought with it a pang, which his strange departure occasioned. She had a confused notion, that his fate was somehow connected with her own; and her struggles to prevent the remembrance of him, served only to show how much her heart was his.

To divert her thoughts from these subjects, and gratify the curiosity so strongly excited on the preceding night, she now took up the MS. but was hindered from opening it by the entrance of Madame La Motte, who came to tell her that the Marquis was gone. They

passed their morning together in work and general conversation; La Motte not appearing till dinner, when he said little, and Adeline less. She asked him, however, if he had heard from her father?

"I have not heard from him," said La Motte; "but there is good reason, as I am informed by the Marquis, to believe he is not far off."

Adeline was shocked, yet she was able to reply with becoming firmness. "I have already, Sir, involved you too much in my distress, and now see that resistance will destroy you, without serving me; I am therefore contented to return to my father, and thus spare you farther calamity."

"This is a rash determination," replied La Motte, "and if you pursue it, I fear you will severely repent. I speak to you as a friend, Adeline, and desire you will endeavour to listen to me without prejudice. The Marquis, I find, has offered you his hand. I know not which circumstance most excites my surprise, that a man of his rank and consequence should solicit a marriage with a person without fortune, or ostensible connexions; or that a person so circumstanced should even for a moment reject the advantages thus offered her. You weep, Adeline, let me hope that you are convinced of the absurdity of this conduct, and will no longer trifle with your good fortune. The kindness I have shown you must convince you of my regard, and that I have no motive for offering you this advice but your advantage. It is necessary, however, to say that, should your father not insist upon your removal, I know not how long my circumstances may enable me to afford even the humble pittance you receive here. Still you are silent."

The anguish which this speech excited, sup-

pressed her utterance, and she continued to weep. At length she said, "Suffer me, Sir, to go back to my father; I should, indeed, make an ill return for the kindness you mention, could I wish to stay, after what you now tell me; and to accept the Marquis, I feel to be impossible." The remembrance of Theodore arose to her mind, and she wept aloud.

La Motte sat for some time musing. "Strange infatuation!" said he, "is it possible that you can persist in this heroism of romance, and prefer a father so inhuman as yours, to the Marquis de Montalt! A destiny so full of danger to a life of splendour and delight!"

"Pardon me," said Adeline, "a marriage with the Marquis would be splendid, but never happy. His character excites my aversion, and I intreat, Sir, that he may no more be mentioned."

CHAPTER X.

"Nor are those empty hearted, whose low sound
Reverbs no hollowness."

Lear.

THE conversation related in the last chapter was interrupted by the entrance of Peter, who, as he left the room, looked significantly at Adeline, and almost beckoned. She was anxious to know what he meant, and soon after went into the hall, where she found him loitering. The moment he saw her, he made a sign of silence, and beckoned her into the recess. "Well, Peter, what is it you would say?" said Adeline.

"Hush, ma'amselle, for Heaven's sake speak lower: if we should be overheard, we are all blown up." Adeline begged him to explain what he meant. "Yes, ma'amselle, that is what I have wanted all day long. I have watched for an opportunity, and looked, and looked, till I was afraid my master himself would see me: but all would not do, you would not understand."

Adeline intreated he would be quick. "Yes, ma'am but I'm so afraid we shall be seen; but I would do much to serve such a good young lady as you, for I could not bear to think of what threatened you without telling you of it."

"For God's sake," said Adeline, "speak quickly, or we shall be interrupted."

"Well then; but you must first promise by the Holy Virgin never to say it was I that told you. My master would"—

"I do, I do!" said Adeline.

"Well then—on Monday evening as I—hark! did not I hear a step? do ma'amselle, just step this way to the cloisters. I would not for the world we should be seen. I'll go out at the hall door, and you can go out through the passage. I would not for the world we should be seen."—Adeline was much alarmed by Peter's words, and hurried to the cloisters. He quickly appeared, and, looking cautiously round, resumed his discourse. "As I was saying, ma'amselle, Monday night, when the Marquis slept here, you know he sat up very late, and I can guess, perhaps, the reason of that. Strange things came out, but it is not my business to tell all I think."

"Pray do speak to the purpose," said Adeline impatiently, "what is this danger which you say threatens me? Be quick, or we shall be observed."

"Danger enough, ma'amselle," replied Peter, "if you knew all, and when you do, what will it signify, for you can't help yourself. But that's neither here or there: I was resolved to tell you, though I may repent it."

"Or rather you are resolved not to tell me," said Adeline, "for you have made no progress towards it. But what do you mean? You was speaking of the Marquis."

"Hush, ma'am, not so loud. The Marquis, as I said, sat up very late, and my master sat up with him. One of his men went to bed in the oak room, and the other staid to undress his lord. So as we were sitting together—Lord have mercy! it made my hair stand on end! I tremble yet. So as we were sitting together—but as sure as I live, yonder is my master; I caught a glimpse of him between the trees, if he sees me it is all over with us. I'll tell you another time." So saying, he hurried into the abbey, leaving Adeline in a state of alarm, curiosity and vexation. She walked out into the forest ruminating upon Peter's words, and endeavouring to guess to what they alluded; there Madame La Motte joined her, and they conversed on various topics till they reached the abbey.

Adeline watched in vain through that day, for an opportunity of speaking with Peter. While he waited at supper, she occasionally observed his countenance with great anxiety, hoping it might afford her some degree of intelligence on the subject of her fears. When she retired, Madame La Motte accompanied her to her chamber, and continued to converse with her for a considerable time, so that she had no means of obtaining an interview with Peter. Madame La Motte appeared to labour under some great affliction, and when Adeline

noticing this, entreated to know the cause of her dejection, tears started into her eyes, and she abruptly left the room.

This behaviour of Madame La Motte concurred with Peter's discourse, to alarm Adeline, who sat pensively upon her bed, given up to reflection, till she was roused by the sound of a clock which stood in the room below, and which now struck twelve She was preparing for rest, when she recollected the MS. and was unable to conclude the night without reading it. The first words she could distinguish were the following:

"Again I return to this poor consolation—again I have been permitted to see another day. It is now midnight! my solitary lamp burns beside me; the time is awful, but to me the silence of noon is as the silence of midnight: a deeper gloom is all in which they differ! The still unvarying hours are numbered only by my sufferings! Great God! when shall I be released!

"But whence this strange confinement? I have never injured him. If death is designed me, why this delay; and for what but death am I brought hither? This abbey—alas,"—Here the MS. was again illegible, and for several pages Adeline could only make out disjointed sentences.

"O bitter draught! when, when shall I have rest! O my friends, will none of ye fly to aid me; will none of ye avenge my sufferings? ah! when it is too late—when I am gone for ever, ye will endeavour to avenge them.

* * * * * * * *

"Once more is night returned to me. Another day has passed in solitude and misery. I have climbed to the casement, thinking the view of nature would refresh my soul, and

somewhat enable me to support these afflictions Alas! even this small comfort is denied me, the windows open towards other parts of this abbey, and admit only a portion of that day which I must never more fully behold. Last night! last night! O scene of horror!" * *

Adeline shuddered. She feared to read the coming sentence, yet curiosity prompted her to proceed. Still she paused: an unaccountable dread came over her. "Some horrid deed has been done here," said she; "the reports of the peasants are true. Murder has been committed." The idea thrilled her with horror. She recollected the dagger which had impeded her steps in the secret chamber, and this circumstance served to confirm her most terible conjectures. She wished to examine it, but it lay in one of these chambers, and she feared to go in quest of it.

"Wretched, wretched victim!" she exclaimed, "could no friend rescue thee from destruction! O that I had been near! yet what could I have done to save thee? Alas! nothing. I forget that even now, perhaps, I am like thee abandoned to dangers, from which I have no friend to succour me. Too surely I guess the author of my miseries!" She stopped, and thought she heared a sigh, such as, on the preceding night, had passed along the chamber. Her blood was chilled, and she sat motionless. The lonely situation of her room, remote from the rest of the family, (for she was now in her old apartment, from which Madame La Motte had removed) who were almost beyond call, struck so forcibly upon her imagination, that she with difficulty preserved herself from fainting. She sat for a considerable time, but all was still. When she was somewhat recovered, her first design was to

alarm the family; but further reflection again withheld her.

She endeavoured to compose her spirits, and addressed a short prayer to that Being who had hitherto protected her in every danger. While she was thus employed, her mind gradually became elevated and reassured; a sublime complacency filled her heart, and she sat down once more to pursue the narrative.

Several lines that immediately followed were obliterated. * * * * * *

"He had told me I should not be permitted to live long, not more than three days, and bade me choose whether I would die by poison or the sword. O the agonies of that moment! Great God! thou seest my sufferings! I often viewed, with a momentary hope of escaping, the high grated windows of my prison—all things within the compass of possibility I was resolved to try, and with an eager desperation I climbed towards the casements, but my foot slipped, and, falling back to the floor, I was stunned by the blow. On recovering, the first sounds I heard were the steps of a person entering my prison. A recollection of the past returned, and deplorable was my condition. I shuddered at what was to come. The same man approached; he looked at me at first with pity, but his countenance soon recovered its natural ferocity. Yet he did not then come to execute the purposes of his employer: I am reserved to another day—Great God, thy will be done!"

Adeline could not go on. All the circumstances that seemed to corroborate the fate of this unhappy man, crowded upon her mind. The reports concerning the abbey—the dreams which had forerun her discovery of the private apartments—the singular manner in which she

had found the MS. and the apparition, which she now believed she had really seen. She blamed herself for having not yet mentioned the discovery of the manuscript and chambers to La Motte, and resolved to delay the disclosure no longer than the following morning. The immediate cares that had occupied her mind, and a fear of losing the manuscript before she had read it, had hitherto kept her silent.

Such a combination of circumstances, she believed could only be produced by some supernatural power, operating for the retribution of the guilty. These reflections filled her mind with a degree of awe, which the loneliness of the large old chamber in which she sat, and the hour of the night, soon heightened into terror. She had never been superstitious, but circumstances so uncommon had hitherto conspired in this affair, that she could not believe them accidental. Her imagination wrought upon by these reflections, again became sensible to every impression; she feared to look around, lest she should again see some dreadful phantom, and she almost fancied she heard voices swell in the storm, which now shook the fabric.

Still she tried to command her feelings so as to avoid disturbing the family, but they became so painful, that even the dread of La Motte's ridicule had hardly power to prevent her quitting the chamber. Her mind was now in such a state, that she found it impossible to pursue the story in the MS. though, to avoid the tortures of suspense, she had attempted it. She laid it down again, and tried to argue herself into composure. "What have I to fear?" said she, "I am at least innocent, and I shall not be punished for the crime of another."

The violent gust of wind that now rushed through the whole suit of apartments shook the door that led from her late bedchamber to the private rooms so forcibly, that Adeline, unable to remain longer in doubt, ran to see from whence the noise issued. The arras, which concealed the door, was violently agitated, and she stood for a moment observing it in indescribable terror, till, believing it was swayed by the wind, she made a sudden effort to overcome her feelings, and was stooping to raise it. At that instant, she thought she heard a voice; she stopped and listened, but every thing was still; yet apprehension so far overcame her, that she had no power either to examine or to leave the chambers.

In a few moments the voice returned; she was now convinced she had not been deceived, for though low, she heard it distinctly, and was almost sure it repeated her own name. So much was her fancy affected, that she even thought it was the same voice she had heard in her dreams. This conviction entirely subdued the small remains of her courage, and sinking into a chair, she lost all recollection.

How long she remained in this state she knew not, but when she recovered, she exerted all her strength, and reached the winding staircase, where she called aloud. No one heard her, and she hastened, as fast as her feebleness would permit, to the chamber of Madame La Motte. She tapped gently at the door, and was answered by Madame, who was alarmed at being awakened at so unusual an hour, and believed that some danger threatened her husband. When she understood that it was Adeline, and that she was unwell, she quickly came to her relief. The terror that was yet visible in Adeline's countenance ex-

cited her inquiries, and the occasion of it was explained to her.

Madame was so much discomposed by the relation, that she called La Motte from his bed, who more angry at being disturbed, than interested for the agitation he witnessed, reproved Adeline for suffering her fancies to overcome her reason. She now mentioned the discovery she had made of the inner chambers and the manuscript, circumstances which roused the attention of La Motte so much that he desired to see the MS. and resolved to go immediately to the apartments described by Adeline.

Madame La Motte endeavoured to dissuade him from his purpose; but La Motte, with whom opposition had always an effect contrary to the one designed, and who wished to throw farther ridicule upon the terrors of Adeline, persisted in his intention. He called to Peter to attend with a light, and insisted that Madame La Motte and Adeline should accompany him; Madame La Motte desired to be excused, and Adeline, at first, declared she could not go; but he would be obeyed.

They ascended the tower, and entered the first chambers together, for each of the party was reluctant to be the last; in the second chamber all was quiet and in order. Adeline presented the MS. and pointed to the arras which concealed the door; La Motte lifted the arras, and opened the door; but Madame La Motte and Adeline intreated to go no farther —again he called to them to follow All was quiet in the first chamber; he expressed his surprise that the rooms should so long have remained undiscovered, and was proceeding to the second, but suddenly stopped. "We will defer our examination till to-morrow," said he,

"the damps of these apartments are unwholesome at any time; but they strike one more sensibly at night. I am chilled. Peter, remember to throw open the windows early in the morning, that the air may circulate."

"Lord bless your honour," said Peter, "don't you see I can't reach them? Besides, I don't believe they are made to open: see what strong iron bars there are; the room looks, for all the world, like a prison; I suppose this is the place the people meant, when they said nobody that had been in ever came out." La Motte, who, during this speech, had been looking attentively at the high windows, which, if he had seen them at first, he had certainly not observed; now interrupted the eloquence of Peter, and bade him carry the light before them. They all willingly quitted these chambers, and returned to the room below, where a fire was lighted, and the party remained together for some time.

La Motte, for reasons best known to himself, attempted to ridicule the discovery and fears of Adeline, till she with a seriousness that checked him, entreated he would desist. He was silent, and soon after Adeline, encouraged by the return of daylight, ventured to her chamber, and for some hours experienced the blessing of undisturbed repose.

On the following day, Adeline's first care was to obtain an interview with Peter, whom she had some hopes of seeing as she went down stairs; he, however, did not appear, and she proceeded to the sitting room, where she found La Motte, apparently much disturbed. Adeline asked him if he had looked at the MS. "I have run my eye over it," said he, "but it is so much obscured by time that it can scarcely be decyphered. It appears to exhibit a

strange romantic story; and I do not wonder, that after you had suffered its terrors to impress your imagination, you fancied you saw spectres, and heard wondrous noises."

Adeline thought La Motte did not choose to be convinced, and she, therefore, forbore reply. During breakfast, she often looked at Peter (who waited) with anxious inquiry; and from his countenance, was still more assured that he had something of importance to communicate. In the hope of some conversation with him, she left the room as soon as possible, and repaired to her favourite avenue, where she had not long remained when he appeared. "God bless you; ma'amselle," said he, "I am sorry I frighted you so last night."

"Frighted me," said Adeline, "how, was you concerned in that?"

He then informed her, that when he thought Monsieur and Madame La Motte were asleep, he had stolen to her chamber-door, with an intention of giving her the sequel of what he had begun in the morning: that he had called several times as loudly as he dared, but receiving no answer, he believed she was asleep, or did not choose to speak with him, and he had, therefore left the door. This account of the voice she had heard relieved Adeline's spirits; she was even surprised that she did not know it, till remembering the perturbation of her mind for some time preceding, this surprise disappeared.

She entreated Peter to be brief in explaining the danger with which she was threatened. "If you'll let me go on my own way, ma'am, you'll soon know it; but if you hurry me, and ask me questions, here and there, out of their places, I don't know what I am saying."

"Be it so;" said Adeline, "only remember that we may be observed."

"Yes, ma'amselle, I'm as much afraid of that as you are, for I believe I should be almost as ill off; however, that is neither here nor there, but I am sure, if you stay in the old abbey another night, it will be the worse for you; for as I said before, I know all about it."

"What mean you, Peter?"

"Why, about this scheme that's going on."

"What then, is my father!"—"Your father," interrupted Peter; "Lord bless you, that is all fudge, to frighten you; your father *nor nobody* else has ever sent after you; I dare say, he knows no more of you than the Pope does—not he." Adeline looked displeased. "You trifle," said she, "if you have any thing to tell, say it quickly; I am in haste."

"Bless you, young lady, I meant no harm, I hope you're not angry; but I'm sure you can't deny that your father is cruel. But as I was saying, the Marquis de Montalt likes you; and he and my master (Peter looked round) have been laying their heads together about you." Adeline turned pale—she comprehended a part of the truth, and eagerly intreated him to proceed.

"They have been laying their heads together about you. This is what Jacques, the Marquis's man, tells me: Says he, Peter, you little know what is going on—I could tell you all if I choose it, but it is not for those who are trusted to tell again. I warrant now your master is close enough with you. Upon which I was piqued, and resolved to make him believe, I could be trusted as well as he. Perhaps not, says I, perhaps I know as much as you, though I do not choose to brag on't; and I winked—

Do you so? says he, then you are closer than I thought for. She is a fine girl, says he, meaning you, ma'amselle; but she is nothing but a poor foundling after all—so it does not much signify. I had a mind to know farther what he meant—so I did not knock him down. But seeming to know as much as he, I at last made him discover all, and he told me—but you look pale, ma'amselle, are you ill?"

"No," said Adeline, in a tremulous accent, and scarcely able to support herself, "pray proceed."

"And he told me, that the Marquis had been courting you a good while, but you would not listen to him, and had even pretended he would marry you, and all would not do. As for marriage, says I, I suppose she knows the marchioness is alive; and I'm sure she is not one for his turn upon other terms."

"The marchioness is really living then!" said Adeline.

"O yes, ma'amselle! we all know that, and I thought you had known it too.—'We shall see that, replied Jacques; at least, I believe that our master will outwit her.'—I stared; I could not help it—'Aye, says he, you know your master has agreed to give her up to my lord.'"

"Good God! what will become of me?" exclaimed Adeline.

"Aye, ma'amselle, I am sorry for you; but hear me out. When Jacques said this, I quite forgot myself, I'll never believe it, said I; I'll never believe my master would be guilty of such a base action; he'll not give her up, or I'm no Christian.—'Oh! said Jacques, for that matter, I thought you'd known all, else I should not have said a word about it. However, you may soon satisfy yourself by going

to the parlour door, as I have done; they're in consultation about it now, I dare say.'"

"You need not repeat any more of this conversation," said Adeline; "but tell me the result of what you heard from the parlour."

"Why, ma'amselle, when he said this, I took him at his word, and went to the door, where, sure enough, I heard my master and the Marquis talking about you. They said a great deal which I could make nothing of; but at last I heard the Marquis say, You know the terms; on these terms only will I consent to bury the past in ob—ob—oblivion—that was the word. Monsieur La Motte then told the Marquis, if he would return to the abbey upon such a night, meaning this very night, ma'amselle, every thing should be prepared according to his wishes; Adeline shall then be yours, my lord said he,—you are already acquainted with her chamber."

At these words Adeline clasped her hands. and raised her eyes to heaven in silent despair, —Peter went on. "When I heard this I could not doubt what Jacques had said. Well, said he, what do you think of it now?—Why, that my master's a rascal, says I.—It's well you don't think mine one too, says he.—Why as for that matter, says I,"——Adeline interrupting him, inquired if he had heard any thing farther. "Just then," said Peter, "we heard Madame La Motte come out from another room, and so we made haste back to the kitchen."

"She was not present at this conversation then?" said Adeline. "No, ma'amselle, but my master has told her of it, I warrant." Adeline was almost as much shocked by this apparent perfidy of Madame La Motte, as by a knowledge of the destruction that threatened

her. After musing a few moments in extreme agitation, "Peter," said she, "you have a good heart, and feel a just indignation at your master's treachery—will you assist me to escape?"

"Ah, ma'amselle!" said he, "how can I assist you; besides, where can we go? I have no friends about here, no more than yourself?"

"O!" replied Adeline, in extreme emotion, "we fly from enemies; strangers may prove friends: assist me but to escape from this forest, and you will claim my eternal gratitude: I have no fears beyond it."

"Why, as for this forest," replied Peter, "I am weary of it myself; though, when we first came, I thought it would be fine living here, at least, I thought it was very different from any life I had lived before. But these ghosts that haunt the abbey, I am no more a coward than other men, but I don't like them; and there *is* so many strange reports abroad; and my master—I thought I could have served him to the end of the world, but now I care not how soon I leave him, for his behaviour to you, ma'amselle."

"You consent then to assist me in escaping?" said Adeline with eagerness.

"Why as to that, ma'amselle, I would willingly if I knew where to go. To be sure I I have a sister lives in Savoy, but that is a great way off: and I have saved a little money out of my wages, but that won't carry us such a long journey"

"Regard not that," said Adeline, "If I was once beyond this forest I would then endeavour to take care of myself, and repay you for your kindness."

"O! as for that, madam"—"Well, well, Peter, let us consider how we may escape.

This night, say you, this night the Marquis is to return?"

"Yes, ma'amselle, to-night about dark. I have just thought of a scheme: my master's horses are grazing in the forest, we may take one of them, and send it back from the first stage: but how shall we avoid being seen? besides, if we go off in the daylight he will soon pursue and overtake us; and if you stay till night, the Marquis will be come, and then there is no chance. If they miss us both at the same time too, they'll guess how it is, and set off directly. Could not you contrive to go first, and wait for me till the hurlyburly's over? Then, while they're searching in the place under ground for you, I can slip away, and we should be out of their reach, before they thought of pursuing us."

Adeline agreed to the truth of all this, and was somewhat surprised at Peter's sagacity. She inquired if he knew of any place in the neighbourhood of the abbey, where she could remain concealed till he came with the horse. "Why yes, madam, there is a place, now I think of it, where you may be safe enough, for nobody goes near: but they say it's haunted, and perhaps you would not like to go there." Adeline remembering the last night, was somewhat startled at this intelligence; but a sense of her present danger pressed again upon her mind, and overcome every other apprehension. "Where is this place?" said she, "if it will conceal me, I shall not hesitate to go."

"It is an old tomb that stands in the thickest part of the forest, about a quarter of a mile off, the nearest way, and almost a mile the other. When my master used to hide himself so much in the forest, I have followed him somewhere thereabouts, but I did not find out

the tomb till the other day. However, that's neither here nor there; if you dare venture to it, ma'amselle, I'll show you the nearest way." So saying, he pointed to a winding path on the right. Adeline, having looked round without perceiving any person near, directed Peter to lead her to the tomb: they pursued the path till turning into a gloomy romantic part of the forest, almost impervious to the rays of the sun, they came to the spot whither Louis had formerly traced his father.

The stillness and solemnity of the scene struck awe upon the heart of Adeline, who paused and surveyed it for some time in silence. At length, Peter led her into the interior part of the ruin, to which they descended by several steps. "Some old abbot," said he, "was formerly buried here, as the Marquis's people say; and it's like enough he belonged to the abbey yonder. But I don't see why he should take it in his head to walk; *he* was not murdered surely?"

"I hope not," said Adeline.

"That's more than can be said for all that lies buried at the abbey, though, and"—Adeline interrupted him; "Hark! surely I hear a noise?" said she, "Heaven protect us from discovery!" they listened, but all was still, and they went on. Peter opened a low door, and they entered upon a dark passage, frequently obstructed by loose fragments of stone, and along which they moved with caution. "Whither are we going?" said Adeline—"I scarcely know, myself," said Peter, "for I never was so far before; but the place seems quiet nough." Something obstructed his way; it as a door, which yielded to his hand, and disovered a kind of cell, obscurely seen by the ilight admitted through a grate above. A

partial gleam shot athwart the place, leaving the greatest part of it in shadow.

Adeline sighed as she surveyed it. "This is a frightful spot," said she, "but if it will afford me a shelter, it is a palace. Remember, Peter, that my peace and honour depend upon your faithfulness; be both discreet and resolute. In the dusk of the evening I can pass from the abbey with least danger of being observed, and in this cell I will wait your arrival. As soon as Monsieur and Madame La Motte are engaged in searching the vaults, you will bring here a horse; three knocks upon the tomb shall inform me of your arrival. For heaven's sake, be cautious, and be punctual."

"I will, ma'amselle, let come what may."

They reascended to the forest, and Adeline, fearful of observation, directed Peter to run first to the abbey, and invent some excuse for his absence, if he had been missed. When she was again alone, she yielded to a flood of tears, and indulged the excess of her distress. She saw herself without friends, without relations, destitute, forlorn, and abandoned to the worst of evils. Betrayed by the very persons, to whose comfort she had so long administered, whom she had loved as her protectors, and revered as her parents! These reflections touched her heart with the most afflicting sensations, and the sense of her immediate danger was for awhile absorbed in the grief occasioned by a discovery of such guilt in others.

At length she roused all her fortitude, and turning towards the abbey, endeavoured to await with patience the hour of evening, and to sustain an appearance of composure in the presence of Monsieur and Madame La Motte. For the present she wished to avoid seeing either of them, doubting her ability to disguise

her emotions: having reached the abbey, she therefore passed on to her chamber. Here she endeavoured to direct her attention to indifferent subjects, but in vain; the danger of her situation, and the severe disappointment she had received in the character of those whom she had so much esteemed, and even loved, pressed hard upon her thoughts. To a generous mind few circumstances are more afflicting than a discovery of perfidy in those whom we have trusted, even though it may fail of any absolute inconvenience to ourselves. The behaviour of Madame La Motte in thus, by concealment, conspiring to her destruction, particularly shocked her.

"How has my imagination deceived me!" said she; "what a picture did it draw of the goodness of the world! And must I then believe that every body is cruel and deceitful? No—let me still be deceived, and still suffer, rather than be condemned to a state of such wretched suspicion." She now endeavoured to extenuate the conduct of Madame La Motte, by attributing it to a fear of her husband. "She dare not oppose his will," said she, "else she would warn me of my danger, and assist me to escape from it. No—I will never believe her capable of conspiring my ruin. Terror alone keeps her silent."

Adeline was somewhat comforted by this thought. The goodness of her heart taught her, in this instance, to sophisticate. She perceived not that, by ascribing the conduct of Madame La Motte to terror, she only softened the degree of her guilt, imputing it to a motive less depraved, but not less selfish. She remained in her chamber till summoned to dinner, when drying her tears, she descended with faltering steps and a palpitating heart to the parlour. When she saw La Motte, in spite

of all her efforts, she trembled and grew pale; she could not behold even with apparent indifference, the man who she knew had destined her to destruction. He observed her emotion, and inquiring if she was ill, she saw the danger to which her agitation exposed her. Fearful lest La Motte should suspect its true cause, she rallied all her spirits, and with a look of complacency, answered she was well.

During dinner she preserved a degree of composure that effectually concealed the varied anguish of her heart. When she looked at La Motte, terror and indignation were her predominant feelings; but when she regarded Madame La Motte, it was otherwise; gratitude for her former tenderness had long been confirmed into affection, and her heart now swelled with the bitterness of grief and disappointment. Madame La Motte appeared depressed, and said little. La Motte seemed anxious to prevent thought, by assuming a fictitious and unnatural gayety: he laughed and talked, and threw off frequent bumpers of wine: it was the mirth of desperation. Madame became alarmed, and would have restrained him, but he persisted in his libations to Bacchus till reflection seemed to be almost overcome.

Madame La Motte, fearful that in the carelessness of the present moment he might betray himself, withdrew with Adeline to another room. Adeline recollected the happy hours she once passed with her, when confidence banished reserve, and sympathy and esteem dictated the sentiments of friendship: now those hours were gone for ever; she could no longer unbosom her griefs to Madame La Motte: no longer even esteem her. Yet notwithstanding all the danger to which she was exposed by the criminal silence of the latter,

she could not converse with her, consciously for the last time, without feeling a degree of sorrow, which wisdom may call weakness, but to which benevolence will allow a softer name.

Madame La Motte, in her conversation, appeared to labour under an almost equal oppression with Adeline: her thoughts were abstracted from the subject of discourse, and there were long and frequent intervals of silence. Adeline more than once caught her gazing with a look of tenderness upon her, and saw her eyes fill with tears. By this circumstance she was so much affected, that she was several times upon the point of throwing herself at her feet, and imploring her pity and protection. Cooler reflection showed her the extravagance and danger of this conduct; she suppressed her emotions, but they at length compelled her to withdraw from the presence of Madame La Motte.

CHAPTER XI.

"Thou! to whom the world unknown
With all its shadowy shapes is shown;
Who seest appalled th' unreal scene,
While fancy lifts the veil between!
Ah, Fear! ah, frantic Fear!
I see, I see thee near,
I know thy hurried step, thy haggard eye,
Like thee I start, like thee disordered fly!
Collins.

ADELINE anxiously watched from her chamber window the sun set behind the distant hills, and the time of her departure drew nigh: it set with uncommon splendour, and threw a fiery gleam athwart the woods, and upon some scattered fragments of the ruins, which

she could not gaze upon with indifference. "Never, probably, again shall I see the sun sink below those hills," said she, "or illumine this scene! Where shall I be when next it sets—where this time to-morrow? sunk, perhaps, in misery!" She wept at the thought. "A few hours," resumed Adeline, "and the Marquis will arrive—a few hours, and this abbey will be a scene of confusion and tumult: every eye will be in search of me, every recess will be explored." These reflections inspired her with new terror, and increased her impatience to be gone.

Twilight gradually came on, and she now thought it sufficiently dark to venture forth; but, before she went she kneeled down and addressed herself to Heaven. She implored support and protection, and committed herself to the care of the God of mercies. Having done this, she quitted her chamber, and passed with cautious steps down the winding staircase. No person appeared, and she proceeded through the door of the tower into the forest. She looked around; the gloom of the evening obscured every object.

With a trembling heart she sought the path pointed out by Peter, which led to the tomb; having found it, she passed along forlorn and terrified. Often did she start as the breeze shook the light leaves of the trees, or as the bat flitted by, gamboling in the twilight; and often, as she looked back towards the abbey, thought she distinguished, amid the deepening gloom, the figures of men. Having proceeded some way, she suddenly heard the feet of horses, and soon after a sound of voices, among which she distinguished that of the Marquis: they seemed to come from the quarter she was approaching, and evidently advanced. Terror

for some minutes arrested her steps; she stood in a state of dreadful hesitation: to proceed, was to run into the hands of the Marquis; to return, was to fall into the power of La Motte.

After remaining for some time uncertain whither to fly, the sounds suddenly took a different direction, and wheeled towards the abbey. Adeline had a short cessation of terror. She now understood that the Marquis had passed this spot only in his way to the abbey, and she hastened to secrete herself in the ruin. At length, after much difficulty, she reached it, the deep shades almost concealing it from her search. She paused at the entrance, awed by the solemnity that reigned within, and the utter darkness of the place; at length she determined to watch without till Peter should arrive. "If any person approaches," said she, "I can hear them before they can see me, and I can then secrete myself in the cell."

She leaned against a fragment of the tomb in trembling expectation, and, as she listened, no sound broke the silence of the hour. The state of her mind can only be imagined, by considering that upon the present time turned the crisis of her fate. "They have now," thought she, "discovered my flight; even now they are seeking me in every part of the abbey. I hear their dreadful voices call me! I see their eager looks." The power of imagination almost overcame her. While she yet looked around, she saw lights moving at a distance; sometimes they glimmered between the trees, and sometimes they totally disappeared.

They seemed to be in a direction with the abbey: and she now remembered, that in the morning she had seen a part of the fabric through an opening in the forest. She had.

therefore, no doubt that the light she saw proceeded from people in search of her; who, she feared, not finding her at the abbey, might direct their steps towards the tomb. Her place of refuge now seemed too near her enemies to be safe, and she would have fled to a more distant part of the forest, but recollected that Peter would not know where to find her.

While these thoughts passed over her mind, she heard distant voices in the wind, and was hastening to conceal herself in the cell, when she observed the light suddenly disappear. All was soon after hushed in silence and darkness, yet she endeavoured to find the way to the cell. She remembered the situation of the outer door and of the passage, and having passed these, she unclosed the door of the cell. Within it was utterly dark. She trembled violently, but entered; and having felt about the walls, at length seated herself on a projection of stone.

She here again addressed herself to Heaven, and endeavoured to reanimate her spirits till Peter should arrive. Above half an hour elapsed in this gloomy recess, and no sound foretold his approach. Her spirits sunk, she feared some part of their plan was discovered, or interrupted, and that he was detained by La Motte. This conviction operated sometimes so strongly upon her fears, as to urge her to quit the cell alone, and seek in flight her only chance of escape.

While this design was fluctuating in her mind, she distinguished through the grate above a clattering of hoofs. The noise approached, and at length stopped at the tomb. In the succeeding moment she heard three strokes of a whip: her heart beat, and for some moments her agitation was such, that she made

no effort to quit the cell. The strokes were repeated: she now roused her spirits, and stepping forward, ascended to the forest. She called "Peter;" for the deep gloom would not permit her to distinguish either man or horse. She was quickly answered, "Hush! ma'amselle, our voices will betray us."

They mounted and rode off as fast as the darkness would permit. Adeline's heart revived at every step they took. She inquired what had passed at the abbey, and how he had contrived to get away. "Speak softly, ma'amselle; you'll know all by and by, but I can't tell you now." He had scarcely spoke ere they saw lights move along at a distance; and coming now to a more open part of the forest, he sat off on a full gallop, and continued the pace till the horse could hold it no longer. They looked back, and no lights appearing, Adeline's terror subsided. She inquired again what had passed at the abbey, when her flight was discovered. "You may speak without fear of being heard," said she, "we are gone beyond their reach, I hope."

"Why, ma'amselle," said he, "you had not been gone long before the Marquis arrived, and Monsieur La Motte then found out you was fled. Upon this a great rout there was, and he talked a great deal with the Marquis."

"Speak louder," said Adeline, "I cannot hear you."

"I will, ma'amselle."—

"Oh! Heavens!" interrupted Adeline, what voice is this? It is not Peter's. For God's sake tell me who you are, and whither I am going?"

"You'll know that soon enough, young lady," answered the stranger, for it was indeed not Peter; "I am taking you where my master

ordered." Adeline, not doubting he was the Marquis's servant, attempted to leap to the ground, but the man dismounting, bound her to the horse. One feeble ray of hope at length beamed upon her mind: she endeavoured to soften the man to pity, and pleaded with all the genuine eloquence of distress; but he understood his interest too well to yield even for a moment to the compassion, which, in spite of himself, her artless supplications inspired.

She now resigned herself to despair, and, in passive silence, submitted to her fate. They continued thus to travel, till a storm of rain, accompanied by thunder and lightning, drove them to the covert of a thick grove. The man believed this a safe situation, and Adeline was now too careless of life to attempt convincing him of his error. The storm was violent and long, but as soon as it abated they set off on a full gallop, and having continued to travel for about two hours, they came to the borders of the forest, and soon after, to a high lonely wall, which Adeline could just distinguish by the moonlight, which now streamed through the parting clouds.

Here they stopped—the man dismounted, and having opened a small door in the wall, he unbound Adeline, who shrieked though involuntarily and in vain, as he took her from the horse. The door opened upon a narrow passage, dimly lighted by a lamp, which hung at the farther end. He led her on; they came to another door; it opened and disclosed a magnificent saloon, splendidly illuminated, and fitted up in the most airy and elegant taste.

The walls were painted in fresco, representing scenes from Ovid, and hung above with silk drawn up in festoons and richly fringed. The sofas were of a silk to suit the hangings.

From the centre of the ceiling, which exhibited a scene from the Armida of Tasso, descended a silver lamp of Etruscan form; it diffused a blaze of light that, reflected from large pier glasses, completely illuminated the saloon. Busts of Horace, Ovid, Anacreon, Tibullus, and Petronius Arbiter, adorned the recesses, and stands of flowers, placed in Etruscan vases, breathed the most delicious perfume. In the middle apartment stood a small table, spread with a collation of fruits, ices and liquors. No person appeared. The whole seemed the works of enchantment, and rather resembled the palace of a fairy than any thing of human conformation.

Adeline was astonished, and inquired where she was, but the man refused to answer her questions, and having desired her to take some refreshments, left her. She walked to the windows, from which a gleam of moonlight discovered to her an extensive garden, where groves and lawns, and water glittering in the moonbeam, composed a scenery of varied and romantic beauty. "What can this mean!" said she: "Is this a charm to lure me to destruction?" She endeavoured, with a hope of escaping, to open the windows, but they were all fastened; she next attempted several doors, and found them also secured.

Perceiving all chance of escape was removed she remained for some time given up to sorrow and reflection; but was at length drawn from her reverie by the notes of soft music, breathing such dulcet and entrancing sounds, as suspended grief, and awakened the soul to tenderness and pensive pleasure. Adeline listened in surprise, and insensibly became soothed and interested; a tender melancholy stole upon her heart, and subdued every harsher

feeling: but the moment the strain ceased, the enchantment dissolved, and she returned to a sense of her situation.

Again the music sounded—"music such as charmeth sleep," and again she gradually yielded to its sweet magic. A female voice accompanied by a lute, a hautboy, and a few other instruments, now gradually swelled into a tone so exquisite, as raised attention into ecstasy. It sunk by degrees, and touched a few simple notes with pathetic softness, when the measure was suddenly changed, and in a gay and airy melody Adeline distinguished the following words.

SONG.

Life's a varied, bright illusion,
Joy and sorrow—light and shade;
Turn from sorrow's dark suffusion,
Catch the pleasures ere they fade.

Fancy paints with hues unreal,
Smile of bliss, and sorrow's mood;
If they both are but ideal,
Why reject the seeming good?

Hence! no more! 'tis Wisdom calls ye,
Bids ye court Time's present aid;
The future trust not—hope enthrals ye,
"Catch the pleasures ere they fade."

The music ceased, but the sound still vibrated on her imagination, and she was sunk in the pleasing languor they had inspired, when the door opened, and the Marquis de Montalt appeared. He approached the sofa where Adeline sat, and addressed her, but she heard not his voice—she had fainted. He endeavoured to recover her, and at length succeeded; but when she unclosed her eyes, and again beheld him, she relapsed into a state of insensibility, and having in vain tried various methods to restore her, he was obliged to call assistance.

Two young women entered, and when she began to revive, he left them to prepare her for his reappearance. When Adeline perceived that the Marquis was gone, and that she was in the care of women, her spirits gradually returned; she looked at her attendants, and was surprised to see so much elegance and beauty.

Some endeavour she made to interest their pity, but they seemed wholly insensible to her distress, and began to talk of the Marquis in terms of the highest admiration. They assured her it would be her own fault if she was not happy, and advised her to appear so in his presence. It was with the utmost difficulty that Adeline forbore to express the disdain which was rising to her lips, and that she listened to their discourse in silence. But she saw the inconvenience and fruitlessness of opposition, and she commanded her feelings.

They were thus proceeding in their praises of the Marquis, when he himself appeared, and waving his hand, they immediately quitted the apartment. Adeline beheld him with a kind of mute despair, while he approached and took her hand, which she hastily withdrew, and turning from him with a look of unutterable distress, burst into tears. He was for some time silent, and appeared softened by her anguish. But again approaching, and addressing her in a gentle voice, he entreated her pardon for the step, which despair and, as he called it, love had prompted. She was too much absorbed in grief to reply, till he solicited a return of his love, when her sorrow yielded to indignation, and she reproached him with his conduct. He pleaded that he had long loved and sought her upon honourable terms, and his offer of those terms he began to repeat, but, raising his eyes towards Adeline, he saw in her

looks the contempt which he was conscious he deserved.

For a moment he was confused, and seemed to understand both that his plan was discovered and his person despised; but soon resuming his usual command of feature, he again pressed his suit, and solicited her love. A little reflection showed Adeline the danger of exasperating his pride, by an avowal of the contempt which his pretended offer of marriage excited; and she thought it not improper, upon an occasion in which the honour and peace of her life were concerned, to yield somewhat to the policy of dissimulation. She saw that her only chance of escaping his designs depended upon delaying them, and she now wished him to believe her ignorant that the marchioness was living, and that his offers were delusive.

He observed her pause, and, in the eagerness to turn her hesitation to his advantage, renewed his proposal with increased vehemence.—"To-morrow shall unite us, lovely Adeline; to-morrow you shall consent to become the marchioness de Montalt. You will then return my love, and"——

"You must first deserve my esteem, my lord."

"I will—I do deserve it. Are you not now in my power, and do I not forbear to take advantage of your situation? Do I not make you the most honourable proposals?"—Adeline shuddered: "If you wish I should esteem you my lord, endeavour, if possible, to make me forget by what means I came into your power; if your views are indeed honourable, prove them so by releasing me from my confinement."

"Can you then wish, lovely Adeline, to fly from him who adores you?" replied the Mar-

quis, with a studied air of tenderness. "Why will you exact so severe a proof of my disinterestedness, a disinterestedness which is not consistent with love? No, charming Adeline, let me at least have the pleasure of beholding you, till the bonds of the church shall remove every obstacle to my love. To-morrow,"—

Adeline saw the danger to which she was now exposed, and interrupted him. "*Deserve* my esteem, Sir, and then you will *obtain* it: as a first step towards which, liberate me from a confinement that obliges me to look on you with terror and aversion. How can I believe your professions of love, while you show that you have no interest in my happiness?" Thus did Adeline, to whom the arts and the practice of dissimulation were hitherto equally unknown, condescend to make use of them in disguising her indignation and contempt. But though these arts were adopted only for the purpose of self-preservation, she used them with reluctance, and almost with abhorrence; for her mind was habitually impregnated with the love of virtue, in thought, word, and action, and while her end in using them was certainly good, she scarcely thought that end could justify the means.

The Marquis persisted in his sophistry. "Can you doubt the reality of that love, which to obtain you has urged me to risk your displeasure? But have I not consulted your happiness, even in the very conduct which you condemn; I have removed you from a solitary and desolate ruin, to a gay and splendid villa, where every luxury is at your command, and where every person shall be obedient to your wishes."

"My first wish is to go hence," said Adeline; "I entreat, I conjure you, my lord, no longer

to detain me. I am a friendless and wretched orphan, exposed to many evils, and I fear abandoned to misfortune: I do not wish to be rude; but allow me to say, that no misery can exceed that I shall feel in remaining here, or indeed, in being any where pursued by the offers you make me!" Adeline had now forgotten her policy: tears prevented her from proceeding, and she turned away her face to hide her emotion.

"By Heaven! Adeline, you do me wrong," said the Marquis, rising from his seat, and seizing her hand; "I love, I adore you; yet you doubt my passion, and are insenible to my vows. Every pleasure possible to be enjoyed within these walls, you shall partake, but beyond them you shall not go." She disengaged her hand, and in silent anguish walked to a distant part of the saloon; deep sighs burst from her heart, and almost fainting, she leaned on a window frame for support.

The Marquis followed her: "Why thus obstinately persist in refusing to be happy?" said he; "recollect the proposal I have made you, and accept it, while it is yet in your power. To-morrow a priest shall join our hands—Surely, being as you are in my power, it must be your interest to consent to this?" Adeline could answer only by tears; she despaired of softening his heart to pity, and feared to exasperate his pride by disdain. He now led her, and she suffered him, to a seat near the banquet, at which he pressed her to partake of a variety of confectionaries, particularly of some liquors, of which he himself drank freely; Adeline accepted only of a peach.

And now the Marquis, who interrupted her silence into a secret compliance with his proposal, resumed all his gayety and spirit, while

the long and ardent regards he bestowed on Adeline, overcame her with confusion and indignation. In the midst of the banquet, soft music again sounded the most tender and impassioned airs; but its effect on Adeline was now lost, her mind being too much embarrassed and distressed by the presence of the Marquis, to admit even the soothings of harmony. A song was now heard, written with that sort of impotent art, by which some voluptuous poets believe they can at once conceal and recommend the principles of vice. Adeline received it with contempt and displeasure, and the Marquis, perceiving its effect, presently made a sign for another composition, which adding the force of poetry to the charms of music, might withdraw her mind from the present scene, and enchant it in sweet delirium.

SONG OF A SPIRIT.

In the sightless air I dwell,
On the sloping sunbeams play;
Delve the cavern's inmost cell,
Where never yet did daylight stray:

Dive beneath the green sea waves,
And gambol in the briny deeps;
Skim ev'ry shore that Neptune laves,
From Lapland's plains to India's steeps;

Oft I mount with rapid force
Above the wide earth's shadowy zone;
Follow the daystar's flaming course,
Through realms of peace to thought unknown;

And listen oft celestial sounds
That swell the air, unheard of men,
As I watch my nightly rounds
O'er woody steep and silent glen,

Under the shade of waving trees,
On the green bank of fountain clear,
At pensive eve I sit at ease,
While dying music murmurs near.

And oft, on point of airy clift,
That hangs upon the western main,
I watch the gay tints passing swift,
And twilight veil the liquid plain!

Then, when the breeze has sunk away,
And ocean scarce is heard to lave,
For me the seanymphs softly play
Their dulcet shells beneath the wave.

Their dulcet shells, I hear them now,
Slow swells the strain upon mine ear,
Now faintly falls—now warbles low,
Till rapture melts into a tear.

The ray that silvers o'er the dew,
And trembles through the leafy shade,
And tints the scene with softer hue,
Calls me to rove the lonely glade;

Or hie me to some ruined tower,
Faintly shown by moonlight gleam,
Where the lone wanderer owns my power
In shadows dire that substance seem;

In thrilling sounds that murmur wo,
And pausing silence makes more dread;
In music breathing from below
Sad solemn strains, that wake the dead.

Unseen I move—unknown am feared!
Fancy's wildest dreams I weave:
And oft by bards my voice is heard
To die along the gales of eve.

When the voice ceased, a mournful strain played with exquisite expression, sounded from a distant horn: sometimes the notes floated on the air in soft undulations—now they swelled into full and sweeping melody, and now died faintly into silence: when again they rose and trembled in sounds so sweetly tender, as drew tears from Adeline, and exclamations of rapture from the Marquis; he threw his arm round her, and would have pressed her towards him, but she liberated herself from his embrace, and with a look, on which was impressed the firm dignity of virtue, yet touched with sor-

row, she awed him to forbearance. Conscious of a superiority, which he was ashamed to acknowledge, and endeavouring to despise the influence which he could not resist, he stood for a moment the slave of virtue, though the votary of vice. Soon, however, he recovered his confidence, and began to plead his love; when Adeline, no longer animated by the spirit she had lately shown, and sinking beneath the languor and fatigue which the various and violent agitations of her mind produced, entreated he would leave her to repose.

The paleness of her countenance, and the tremulous tone of her voice, were too expressive to be misunderstood; and the Marquis, bidding her remember to-morrow, with some hesitation withdrew. The moment she was alone, she yielded to the bursting anguish of her heart, and was so absorbed in grief, that it was some time before she perceived she was in the presence of the young women, who had lately attended her, and had entered the saloon soon after the Marquis quitted it: they came to conduct her to her chamber. She followed them for some time in silence, till, prompted by desperation, she again endeavoured to awaken their compassion; but again the praises of the Marquis were repeated, and perceiving that all attempts to interest them in her favour were in vain she dismissed them. She secured the door through which they had departed, and then, in the languid hope of discovering some means of escape, she surveyed her chamber. The airy elegance with which it was fitted up, and the luxurious accommodations with which it abounded, seemed designed to fascinate the imagination, and to seduce the heart. The hangings were of straw coloured silk, adorned with a variety of landscapes and

historical paintings, the subjects of which partook of the voluptuous character of the owner; the chimney piece of Parian marble, was ornamented with several reposing figures from the antique. The bed was of silk, the colour of the hangings richly fringed with purple and silver, and the head made in form of a canopy. The steps, which were placed near the bed to assist in ascending it, were supported by Cupids, apparently of solid silver, China vases, filled with perfume, stood in several of the recesses, upon stands of the same structure as the toilet, which was magnificent, and ornamented with a variety of trinkets.

Adeline threw a transient look upon these various objects, and proceeded to examine the windows, which descended to the floor, and opened into balconies towards the garden she had seen from the saloon. They were now fastened, and her efforts to move them were ineffectual; at length she gave up the attempt. A door next attracted her notice, which she found was not fastened; it opened upon a dressing closet, to which she descended by a few steps: two windows appeared, she hastened towards them; one refused to yield, but her heart beat with sudden joy when the other opened to her touch.

In the transport of the moment she forgot that its distance from the ground might yet deny the escape she meditated. She returned to lock the door of the closet, to prevent a surprise, which however was unnecessary, that of the bed room being already secured. She now looked out from the window; the garden lay before her, and she perceived that the window, which descended to the floor, was so near the ground, that she might jump from it with ease: almost in the same moment she perceived this,

she sprang forward, and alighted safely in an extensive garden, resembling more an English pleasure ground, than a series of French parterres.

Thence she had little doubt of escaping either by some broken fence, or low part of the wall; she tripped lightly along, for hope played round her heart. The clouds of the late storm were now dispersed, and the moonlight, which slept on the lawns and spangled the flowrets, yet heavy with rain drops, afforded her a distinct view of the surrounding scenery: she followed the direction of the high wall that adjoined the chateau, till it was concealed from her sight by a thick wilderness, so entangled with boughs and obscured by darkness, that she feared to enter, and turned aside into a walk on the right; it conducted her to the margin of a lake overhung with lofty trees.

The moonbeams dancing upon the waters, that with gentle undulation played along the shore, exhibited a scene of tranquil beauty, which would have soothed a heart less agitated than was that of Adeline: she sighed as she transiently surveyed it, and passed hastily on in search of the garden wall, from which she had now strayed a considerable way after wandering for some time, through alleys and over lawns, without meeting with any thing like a boundary to the grounds, she again found herself at the lake, and now traversed its border with the footsteps of despair: tears rolled down her cheeks. The scene around exhibited only images of peace and delight; every object seemed to repose; not a breath waved the foliage, not a sound stole through the air: it was in her bosom only that tumult and distress prevailed. She still pursued the windings of the shore, till an opening in the woods

conducted her up a gentle ascent: the path now wound along the side of a hill, where the gloom was so deep that it was with some difficulty she found her way: suddenly, however, the avenue opened to a lofty grove, and she perceived a light issue from a recess at some distance.

She paused, and her first impulse was to retreat, but listening and hearing no sound, a faint hope beamed upon her mind, that the person to whom the light belonged might be one to favour her escape. She advanced with trembling and cautious steps towards the recess, that she might secretly observe the person, before she ventured to enter it. Her emotion increased as she approached, and having reached the bower, she beheld, through an open window, the Marquis reclining on a sofa, near which stood a table covered with fruit and wine. He was alone, and his countenance was flushed with drinking.

While she gazed, fixed to the spot by terror, he looked up towards the casement; the light gleamed full upon her face, but she stayed not to learn whether he had observed her, for, with the swiftness of sound, she left the place, and ran without knowing whether she was pursued. Having gone a considerable way, fatigue, at length, compelled her to stop, and she threw herself upon the turf, almost fainting with fear and languor. She knew if the Marquis detected her in an attempt to escape, he would, probably, burst the bounds which he had hitherto prescribed to himself, and that she had the most dreadful evils to expect. The palpitations of terror were so strong, that she could with difficulty breathe.

She watched and listened in trembling expectation, but no form met her eye, no sound

er ears; in this state she remained a considerable time. She wept, and the tears she shed relieved her oppressed heart. "O my father!" said she, "why did you abandon your child? If you knew the dangers to which you have exposed her, you would, surely, pity and relieve her. Alas! shall I never find a friend; am I destined still to trust and be deceived?—Peter, too, could he be treacherous?" She wept again, and then returned to a sense of her present danger, and to a consideration of the means of escaping it; but no means appeared.

To her imagination the grounds were boundless; she had wandered from lawn to lawn, and from grove to grove, without perceiving any termination to the place; the garden wall she could not find, but she resolved neither to return to the chateau, nor to relinquish her search. As she was rising to depart, she perceived a shadow move along at some distance; she stood still to observe it. It slowly advanced, and then disappeared, but presently she saw a person emerge from the gloom, and approach the spot where she stood. She had no doubt that the Marquis had observed her, and she ran with all possible speed to the shade of some woods on the left. Footsteps pursued her, and she heard her name repeated, while she in vain endeavoured to quicken her pace.

Suddenly the sound of pursuit turned, and sunk away in a different direction: she paused to take breath, she looked around, and no person appeared. She now proceeded slowly along the avenue, and had almost reached its termination, when she saw the same figure emerge from the woods and dart across the avenue; it instantly pursued her and approached. A voice called her, but she was gone be-

yond its reach, for she had sunk senseless upon the ground: it was long before she revived; when she did, she found herself in the arms of a stranger, and made an effort to disengage herself.

"Fear nothing, lovely Adeline," said he, "fear nothing: you are in the arms of a friend, who will encounter any hazard for your sake; who will protect you with his life." He pressed her gently to his heart.

"Have you then forgot me?" continued he. She looked earnestly at him, and was now convinced that it was Theodore who spoke. Joy was her first emotion; but recollecting his former abrupt departure at a time so critical to her safety, and that he was the friend of the Marquis, a thousand mingled sensations struggled in her breast, and overwhelmed her with mistrust, apprehension, and disappointment.

Theodore raised her from the ground, and while he yet supported her, "Let us immediately fly from this place," said he; "a carriage waits to receive us; it shall go wherever you direct, and convey you to your friends." This last sentence touched her heart: "Alas, I have no friends!" said she, "nor do I know whither to go." Theodore gently pressed her hand between his, and in a voice of the softest compassion, said, "*My* friends then shall be yours; suffer me to lead you to them. But I am in agony while you remain in this place; let us hasten to quit it." Adeline was going to reply, when voices were heard among the trees, and Theodore supporting her with his arm, hurried her along the avenue: they continued their flight, till Adeline, panting for breath, could go no farther.

Having paused awhile, and heard no footsteps in pursuit, they renewed their course:

Theodore knew that they were now not far from the garden wall; but he was also aware, that in the intermediate space several paths wound from remote parts of the grounds into the walk he was to pass, from whence the Marquis's people might issue and intercept him. He, however, concealed his apprehensions from Adeline, and endeavoured to soothe and support her spirits.

At length they reached the wall, and Theodore was leading her towards a low part of it, near which stood the carriage, when again they heard voices in the air. Adeline's spirits and strength were nearly exhausted, but she made a last effort to proceed, and she now saw the ladder at some distance, by which Theodore had descended to the garden. "Exert yourself yet a little longer," said he, "and you will be in safety." He held the ladder while she ascended; the top of the wall was broad and level, and Adeline, having reached it, remained there till Theodore followed and drew the ladder to the other side.

When they had descended, the carriage appeared in waiting, but without the driver. Theodore feared to call, lest his voice should betray him; he, therefore, put Adeline into the carriage, and went himself in search of the postillion, whom he found asleep under a tree at some distance; having awakened him, they returned to the vehicle, which soon drove furiously away. Adeline did not yet dare to believe herself safe, but after proceeding a considerable time without interruption, joy burst upon her heart, and she thanked her deliverer in terms of the warmest gratitude. The sympathy expressed in the tone of his voice and manner, proved that his happiness, on this occasion, almost equalled her own.

As reflection gradually stole upon her mind, anxiety superseded joy; in the tumult of the late moments, she thought only of escape, but the circumstances of her present situation now appeared to her, and she became silent and pensive: she had no friends to whom she could fly, and was going with a young Chevalier, almost a stranger to her, she knew not whither. She remembered how often she had been deceived and betrayed where she trusted most, and her spirits sunk: she remembered also the former attention which Theodore had shown her, and dreaded lest his conduct might be prompted by a selfish passion. She saw this to be possible, but she disdained to believe it probable, and felt, that nothing could give her greater pain than to doubt the integrity of Theodore.

He interrupted her reverie, by recurring to her late situation at the abbey. "You would be much surprised," said he, "and I fear offended, that I did not attend my appointment at the abbey, after the alarming hints I had given you in our last interview. That circumstance has, perhaps, injured me in your esteem, if, indeed, I was ever so happy as to possess it; but my designs were overruled by those of the Marquis de Montalt; and I think I may venture to assert, that my distress upon this occasion was, at least, equal to your apprehensions."

Adeline said, "She had been much alarmed by the hints he had given her, and by his failing to afford farther information, concerning the subject of her danger; and"—She checked the sentence that hung on her lips, for she perceived that she was unwarily betraying the interest he held in her heart. There were a few moments of silence, and neither party seemed

perfectly at ease. Theodore, at length, renewed the conversation: "Suffer me to acquaint you," said he, "with the circumstances that withheld me from the interview I solicited; I am anxious to exculpate myself." Without waiting her reply, he proceeded to inform her, that the Marquis had, by some inexplicable means, learned or suspected the subject of their last conversation, and perceiving his designs were in danger of being counteracted, had taken effectual means to prevent her obtaining farther intelligence of them. Adeline immediately recollected that Theodore and herself had been seen in the forest by La Motte, who had, no doubt, suspected their growing intimacy, and had taken care to inform the Marquis how likely he was to find a rival in his friend.

"On the day following that on which I last saw you," said Theodore, "the Marquis, who is my colonel, commanded me to prepare to attend in my regiment, and appointed the following morning for my journey. This sudden order gave me some surprise, but I was not long in doubt concerning the motive for it; a servant of the Marquis, who had been long attached to me, entered my room soon after I had left his lord, and expressing concern at my abrupt departure, dropped some hints respecting it, which excited my surprise. I inquired farther, and was confirmed in the suspicions I had for some time entertained of the Marquis's designs upon you.

"Jacques farther informed me, that our late interview had been noticed and communicated to the Marquis. His information had been obtained from a fellow-servant, and it alarmed me so much, that I engaged him to send me intelligence from time to time concerning the

proceedings of the Marquis. I now looked forward to the evening which would bring me again to your presence with increased impatience: but the ingenuity of the Marquis effectually counteracted my endeavours and wishes: he had made an engagement to pass the day at the villa of a nobleman some leagues distant, and notwithstanding all the excuses I could offer, I was obliged to attend him. Thus compelled to obey, I passed a day of more agitation and anxiety than I had ever before experienced. It was midnight before we returned to the Marquis's chateau. I arose early in the morning to commence my journey, and resolved to seek an interview with you before I left the province.

"When I entered the breakfast room, I was much surprised to find the Marquis there already, who commending the beauty of the morning, declared his intention of accompanying me as far as Chineau. Thus unexpectedly deprived of my last hope, my countenance, I believe, expressed what I felt, for the scrutinizing eye of the Marquis instantly changed from seeming carelessness to displeasure. The distance from Chineau to the abbey was at least twelve leagues; yet I had once some intention of returning from thence, when the Marquis should leave me, till I recollected the very remote chance there would even then be of seeing you alone, and also, that, if I was observed by La Motte, it would awaken all his suspicions, and caution him against any future plan I might see it expedient to attempt; I therefore proceeded to join my regiment.

"Jacques sent me frequent accounts of the operations of the Marquis, but his manner of relating them was so very confused, that they only served to perplex and distress me. His

last letter, however, alarmed me so much, that my residence in quarters became intolerable; and, as I found it impossible to obtain leave of absence, I secretly left the regiment, and concealed myself in a cottage about a mile from the chateau, that I might obtain the earliest intelligence of the Marquis's plans. Jacques brought me daily information, and at last, an account of the horrible plot which was laid for the following night.

"I saw little probability of warning you of your danger. If I ventured near the abbey, La Motte might discover me, and frustrate every attempt on my part to save you: yet I determined to encounter this risk for the chance of seeing you, and towards evening I was preparing to set out for the forest, when Jacques arrived, and informed me, that you was to be brought to the chateau. My plan was thus rendered less difficult. I learned, also, that the Marquis by means of those refinements in luxury, with which he is but too well acquainted, designed, now that his apprehension of losing you was no more, to seduce you to his wishes, and impose upon you by a fictitious marriage. Having obtained information concerning the situation of the room allotted you, I ordered a chaise to be in waiting, and with a design of scaling your window, and conducting you thence, I entered the garden at midnight."

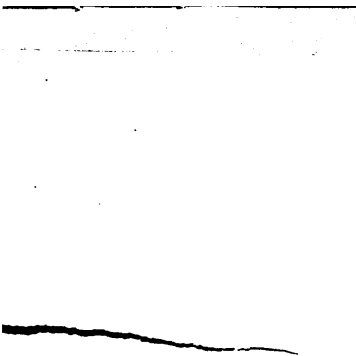
Theodore having ceased to speak, "I know not how words can express my sense of the obligations I owe you," said Adeline, "or my gratitude for your generosity."

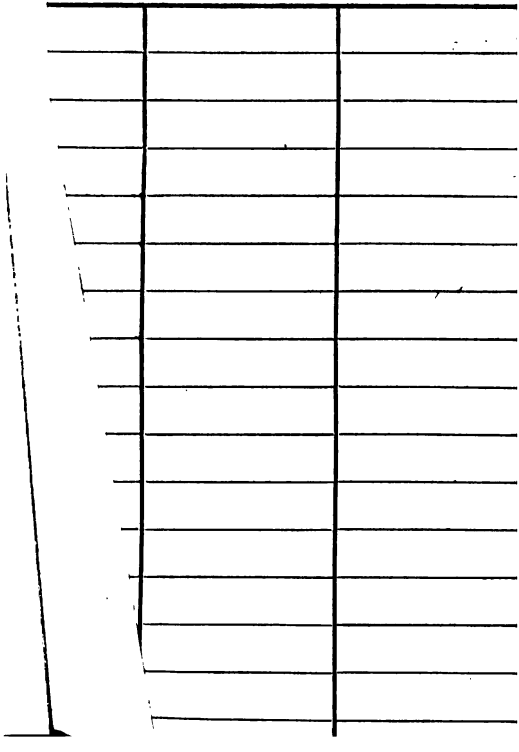
"Ah! call it not generosity," he replied, "it was love." He paused. Adeline was silent. After some moments of expressive emotion, he resumed; "But pardon this abrupt

declaration; yet why do I call it abrupt, since my actions have already disclosed what my lips have never, till this instant, ventured to acknowledge." He paused again, Adeline was still silent. "Yet do me the justice to believe, that I am sensible of the impropriety of pleading my love at present, and have been surprised into this confession. I promise also to forbear from a renewal of the subject, till you are placed in a situation, where you may freely accept or refuse the sincere regards I offer you. If I could, however, now be certain that I possess your esteem, it would relieve me from much anxiety."

Adeline felt surprised that he should doubt her esteem for him, after the signal and generous service he had rendered her; but she was not yet acquainted with the timidity of love. "Do you then," said she, in a tremulous voice, "believe me ungrateful? it is impossible I can consider your friendly interference in my behalf without esteeming you." Theodore immediately took her hand, and pressed it to his lips in silence. They were both too much agitated to converse, and continued to travel for some miles without exchanging a word.

END OF VOL. I.



HE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building